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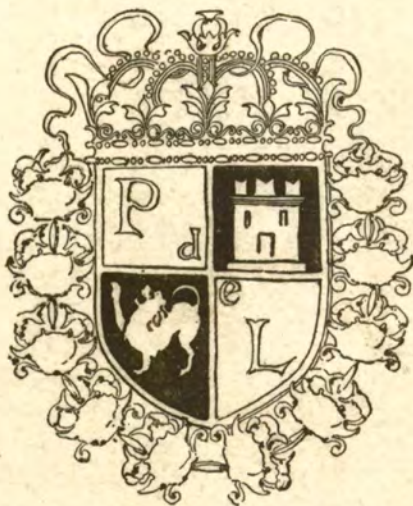
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·PONCE DE LEON·
·ALCAZAR·

·CASA MONICA·



ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA.

FLORIDA

THE AMERICAN RIVIÈRA

ST. AUGUSTINE

THE WINTER NEWPORT

THE PONCE DE LEON

THE ALCAZAR

THE CASA MONICA

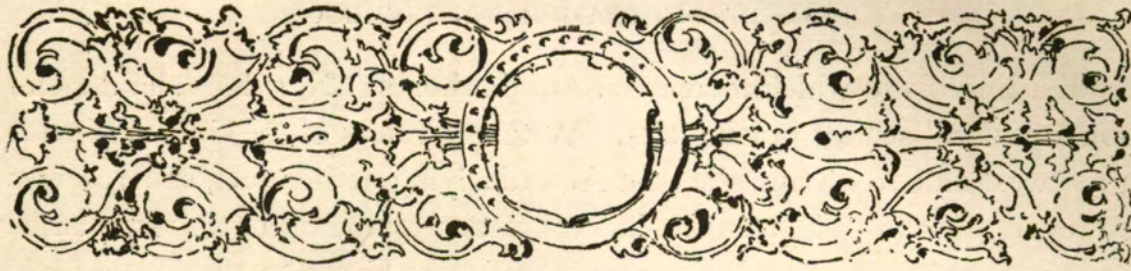
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FLORIDA
ST. AUGUSTINE

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REPRODUCED BY THE ARCHITECTS



FLORIDA

The American Riviera

*"Knowest thou the land where the lemon trees bloom,
Where the golden orange grows in the deep thicket's gloom,
Where the wind ever soft from the blue heaven blows
And the groves are of laurel and myrtle and rose?"*



ES; at the southern extremity of the United States and projecting from the American continent lies a slip of land forming one of the grand political divisions of the country, and known in the American galaxy as Florida.

Florida, the American Italy, holds physically the same position to this continent that her classic prototype does to Europe, while her advantages are infinitely greater. Free alike from the chill mistral, which blows from the snow-clad Apennines, and the stifling sirocco from torrid Sahara, she rests upon her coral bed and beckons the stranger to linger amid her orange groves without fear of the

FLORIDA—THE AMERICAN RIVIÈRA

dreadful tremblado which menaces volcanic shores. Nor does she depend upon an inland sea for bracing airs. With the waters of the Gulf of Mexico on the west and south and the vast Atlantic lying at her feet, she receives from every quarter of heaven life-laden breezes, tempered to a most charming equability by that "salubrious mystery"—the Gulf Stream.

Since Lord Brougham realized the benefit of a retreat to Cannes multitudes have each winter sought refuge from the blasts of Northern seas, and neither the terrors of the English Channel nor the vexations of custom-house officials have been able to deter them from seeking the sunshine of Nice, Cannes and Mentone; only an earthquake could do this.

Experience and statistics establish the fact that to battle with the rigors of a Northern winter involves an expenditure of vitality which shortens life. To be deprived of the vivifying effect of sunshine; to breathe air whose oxygen has been burned in a furnace; to resist the intense cold, the bitter winds and the snow-dampness of the Northern atmosphere, are experiences through which none but the strongest can hope to reach much beyond middle age. The vexatious alternative of imprisonment in close quarters, or the dangers attending exercise out of doors, with the consequent tax upon nervous power, have forced the recognition of the necessity in many cases, and of the desirability in all, of exodus to a milder winter climate. To those accustomed to apartments in Northern cities it is especially easy to throw off this bondage of winter, and, at less cost, to find in Florida a more luxurious life, where a sun-warmed atmosphere replaces the baked air of anthracite furnaces, and where continuous bright days invite to healthful out-door enjoyment. The change once made, a repetition becomes irresistible, until a life-time habit is formed, and the winter resident of Florida pities, while he wonders at, those whom he has left behind him in the frozen North. Here are the vivid blue skies and brilliant sunshine of Egypt and of Spain, while the "best loved west wind" sighs through the pine barrens with sweet and hallowed tone, bearing to the invalid resinous and healing odors.

Look upon Florida in April, and cease to wonder that the stern

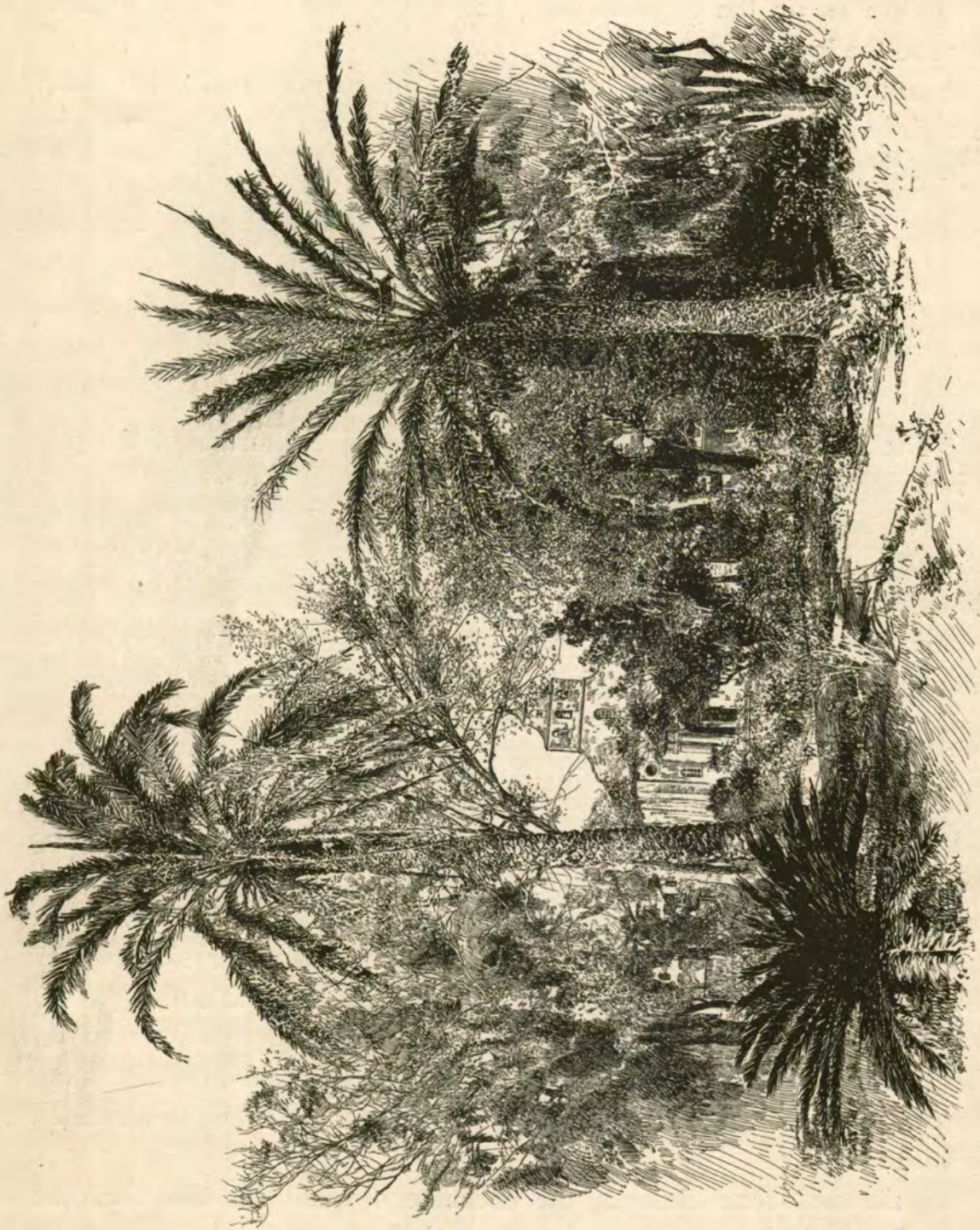


OLD CITY GATE—ST. AUGUSTINE

FLORIDA—THE AMERICAN RIVIÈRA

old Cavalier Ponce de Leon, in pursuit of a chimera, should have been entranced by the sight he saw from the deck of his caravel upon arriving on the coast in 1512. Here not only flowers, shrubs, and undergrowth by millions were in bloom, but the very forest trees filled the air with the fragrance of their blossoms. The palmetto spreading its fan-like leaves vies in majestic stateliness with the plumes of the date palm, while the magnolia reflects the glowing sunshine from its glossy leaves and contrasts its cream-like flowers with the radiant scarlet of the Indian pomegranate. Lilies in their grace and purity, as of old, put to shame "Solomon in all his glory," and the vine with delicate tendrils clings round every rugged trunk that needs a shade. Verbenas carpet the earth with matchless colors, and when the heavens, which are always blue, are bespangled with stars, the air is filled with showers of fire-flies, lighting up the dark cypress and ancient cedars, hung with funereal mosses, and presenting a weird picture of beauty which pen fails to describe. All this, and more than this, Ponce must have beheld when he landed, and in this Elysium of constantly renewed bliss of youth and beauty can it be doubted that he religiously believed he had realized the fable of the promised land?

We claim that the day-dreams of the sixteenth century have become the realizations of the nineteenth, and that the true Elixir of Life is to be found in this incomparable treasury of balmy airs, golden sunshine and health-giving waters. Like the inexhaustible stores of mineral wealth hidden away in the vast recesses of the American continent and upon which the Almighty had set his "time lock," these treasures only await the "open-sesame" of modern progress and effort. In a soil which only needs "to be tickled with the hoe to smile with the harvest," the products are as varied as they are valuable. Among the staples are cotton, sugar and tobacco, while Florida stands peerless among all the world's southern latitudes in the production of the orange. Here, growing side by side, we find the stately date palm of Asia, the pepper tree of Sumatra, the fig of Syria, while the variety and quantities of small fruits sent North during the midwinter season attest the capabilities of this most favored State as temptingly to



EPISCOPAL CHURCH GROVES—ST. AUGUSTINE

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the epicure as do the gigantic oaks, the kingly palmettos and fantastic yuccas to the lover of nature.

Beautiful, generous land, offering every gift to man that man's heart can rightly desire, surely Ponce de Leon might have been satisfied with his portion of the discovery.

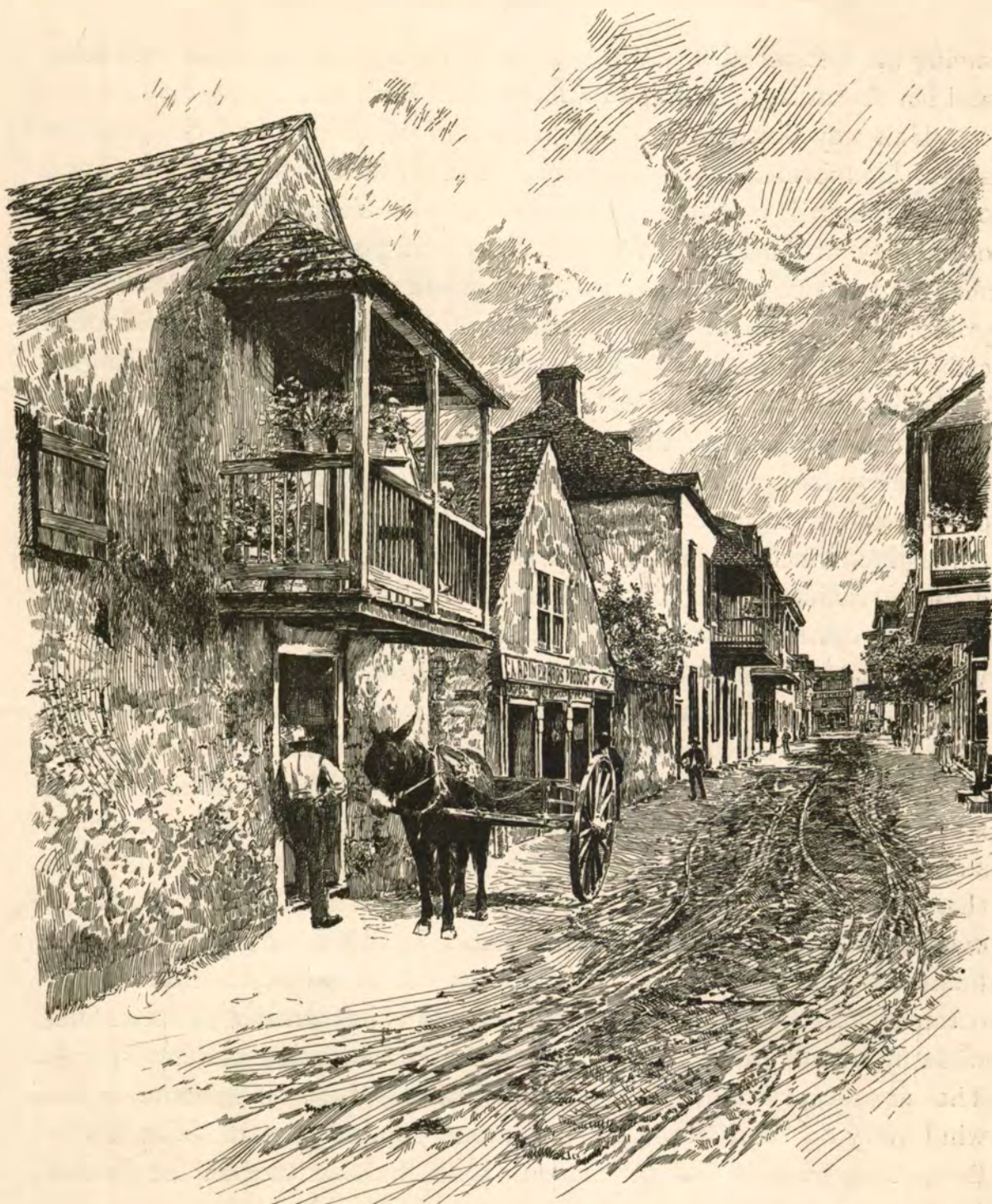
ST. AUGUSTINE

The Winter Newport

"The St. Augustine of the present and the St. Augustine of the past are in striking contrast.

"We see to-day [1859] a town less in population than hundreds of places of but few months' existence, dilapidated in its appearance, with the stillness of death hanging over it, its waters undisturbed except by the passing canoe of the fisherman, its streets unenlivened by busy traffic, and at midday it might be supposed to have sunk under the enchanter's wand into an almost eternal sleep. With no participation in the active schemes of life, and no hopes for the future; with no emulation and no feverish visions of future greatness; with no corner lots on sale or in demand; with no stocks, save those devoted to the disturbers of the public peace; with no excitements and no events; a quiet, undisturbed, dreamy vision of still-life surrounds its walls and creates a sensation of entire repose, pleasant or otherwise, as it falls upon the heart of the weary wanderer sick of life's busy bustle, or upon the restless mind of him who looks to nothing as life except perpetual unceasing action. The one rejoicing in its rest, the other chafing under its monotony. And yet about the old city there clings a host of historic associations which throw around it a charm which few can fail to feel."

Again the scene changes, the enchanter's wand has been uplifted, and every count contained in the above indictment has been reversed,



CHARLOTTE STREET—ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

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saving the last, for still about the old city cling her immortal memories, and her charm is exerted upon all who enter her gates.

Half way down the Atlantic sea-board of Florida and on a narrow slip of land formed by the St. John's River on the one side and the Ocean on the other is situated St. Augustine—la siempre fiel ciudad—the oldest city in America, where the cross was planted, the martyr's blood shed and a vice-regal court was held while Manhattan Island was still primeval forest. The hoary ramparts of her ancient fort, her Moorish cathedral, her crumbling city gates, her narrow streets, overhanging balconies, and the dark-eyed descendants of Spanish cavaliers, who so harmoniously complete the picture, furnish materials out of which the imaginative have woven many a romance of Old Spain. The escutcheon of Menendez is traced in blood, and the foundation-stone of Saint Augustine, which he laid, is saturated with the gore of brave and undaunted victims to religious tyranny and persecution; and as with "the cross first came civilization to these shores" it was of such a questionable variety that doubtless *unaccountable paganism*, with freedom, was more preferable to the untutored savage mind than *reasonable Christianity*, with enforced labor. Historians assert, (in proof of these moral cogitations), that the walls of San Marco represent the enforced labor of Indians during a period of over half a century, and, perhaps to round a period, "that every stone in its ramparts is cemented with the blood of a victim." But to the charm which the antique and foreign aspect of this little city exercises over the pleasure seeker and the dreamer is added, for the practical and the invalid, a record of three hundred years of uninterrupted health. Salt ocean breezes sweep over it, the soil beneath is infiltrated with ocean tides, while from still greater depths gush forth health-giving sulphur springs. The air is ever balmy, yet fresh and bracing, there being more or less wind every day, and devoid of that moist, oppressive heat which, later in the season, visitors find so enervating on the river and in the interior. Its very situation—surrounded by sea-rivers and salt marshes—bids defiance to that insidious foe, malaria, and every season brings numbers to

ST. AUGUSTINE—THE WINTER NEWPORT

St. Augustine from New York, the Middle States, and even New England, to be cured of its depressing effects. In this connection a quotation from the report of Surgeon-General Lawson of the U. S. Army is appropriate:

“As respects *health*, the climate of Florida stands pre-eminent. That the peninsular climate of Florida is much more salubrious than that of any other State in the Union is clearly established by the medical statistics of the army. Indeed, the statistics in this bureau demonstrate the fact that the diseases which result from malaria are of a much milder type in the peninsula of Florida than in any other State in the Union. These records show that the ratio of deaths to the number of cases of remittent fever has been much less than among the troops serving in any other portion of the United States. In the Middle Division of the United States the proportion is one death to thirty-six cases of remittent fever; in the Northern Division, one to fifty-two; in the Southern Division, one to fifty-four; in Texas, one to seventy-eight; in California, one to one hundred and forty-eight; while in Florida it is but *one to two hundred and eighty-seven*. In short, it may be asserted, without fear of refutation, that Florida possesses a much more agreeable and salubrious climate than any other State or Territory in the Union.”

Year after year the attractions of St. Augustine have drawn increased numbers of pleasure seekers and invalids, until now, like Nice, it is the winter home of thousands. As regards all those adjuncts which make our exterior life enjoyable, Florida possesses a larger share than any other climate on the continent, and old St. Augustine, with her cool sea breeze and cloudless sun, enjoys the reputation of being the Eden of Florida. While the North wages its annual war with zero and all its attendant evils, here the perfection of climate enables one to seek outdoor exercise and enjoyments, and none of these present a more attractive pastime than that of yachting on St. Augustine water. The Yacht Club—presenting the anomaly of having its “season” during the winter months—includes in its membership over two hundred names prominent in the chief cities from Boston to San Francisco, and with a constant succession

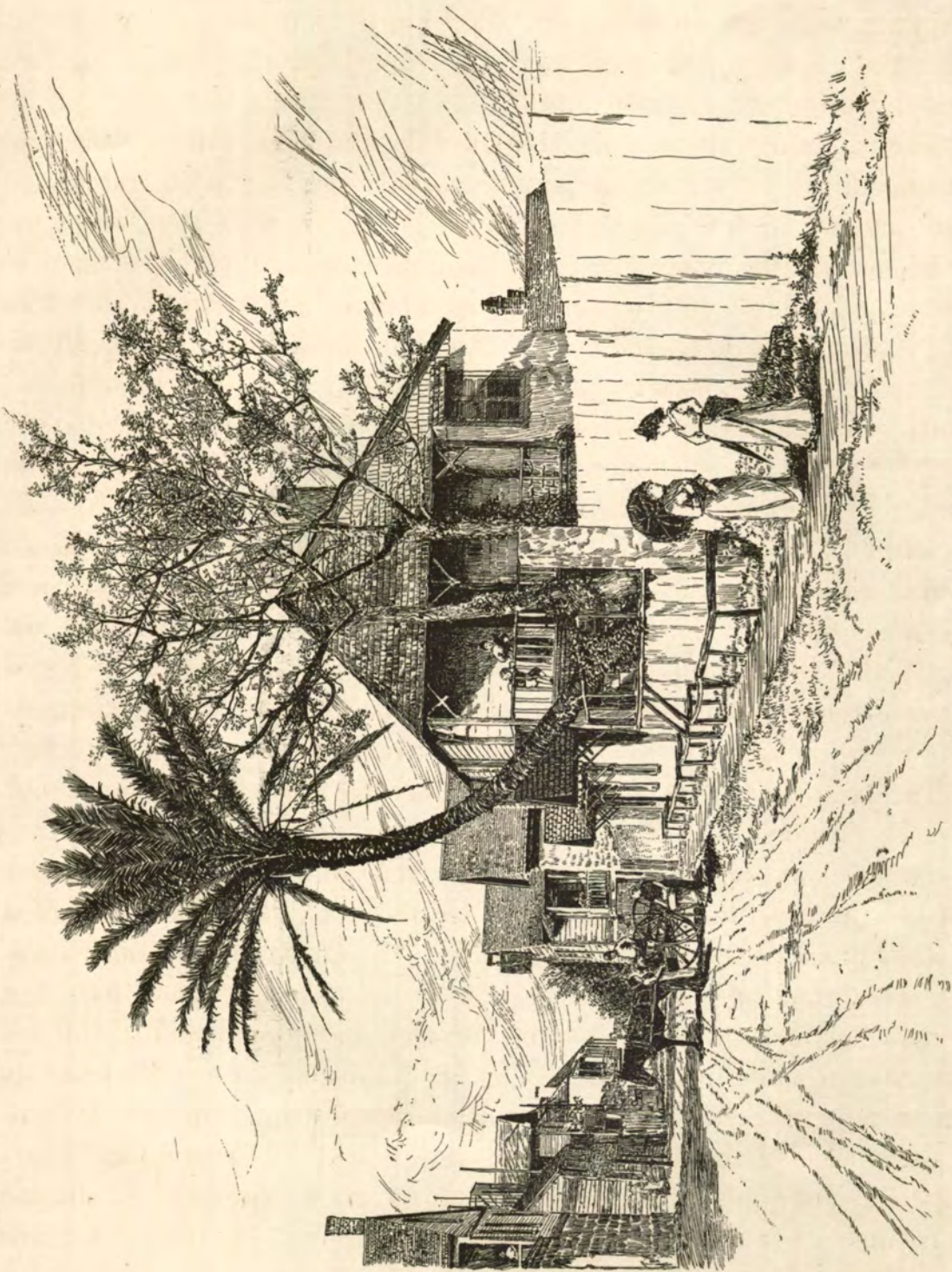
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of regattas, balls, illuminations, etc., adds much to the social enjoyments of the place. All out-of-door sports, as riding, driving, tennis, etc., are en règle during the entire winter.

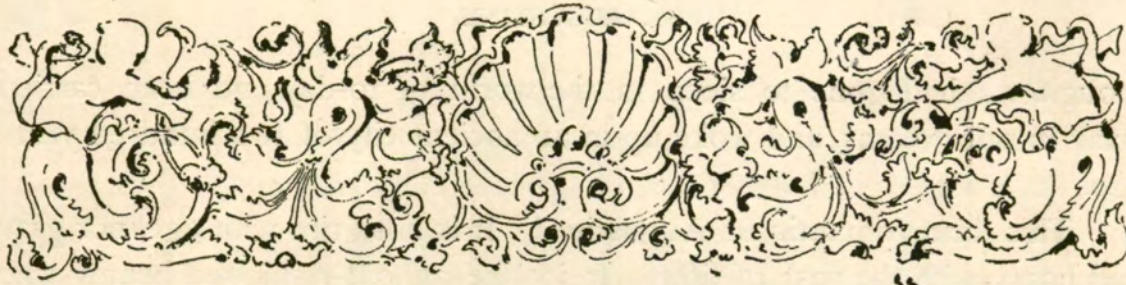
The shooting in the neighborhood is excellent; the woods and thickets during the season teem with quail, snipe, etc., while the placid waters abound in fish of great variety. There are few days during the year when upon the San Sebastian Bridge there are not a score of anglers for bass and trout. St. Augustine being military headquarters, excellent music is an item of daily enjoyment. Amid all these attractions of climate, it is hardly to be expected that there should be no reverse side to the picture. Florida occasionally feels the spent breath of a north-easterly storm, yet this is so uncommon that it serves but to enhance the sense of her rare exemption. Statistics show that during the past fifteen years there have been only fifty-two days upon which the mercury has reached the freezing point in this benign region, and usually the result is but a mere film of ice forming during the night and disappearing before the rising sun. During the last fifty years there has been but one frost of any severity (1886), and this but served to demonstrate the hardness of the orange tree—the crop following it having been exceptionally fine.

The light occasional frosts of December are welcomed as preventive of the enervating effect of continuous warmth.

These many and unique advantages have stimulated the aggressive spirit of enterprise in St. Augustine. Northern astuteness has measured the possibilities of the place, and Northern capital has made them available. The influx of wealthy and fastidious visitors every winter has been met by a commensurate expenditure for their reception, and the millions which have recently been invested in St. Augustine have completed its claim to be considered the leading winter resort of the country. Besides the easy accessibility of St. Augustine—now only twenty-four hours from New York—she has the advantage of good shops, of clubs, an opera house, a public library, and of well-supplied markets, magnificent bathing establishments and facilities for all sports.



ST. FRANCIS STREET—ST. AUGUSTINE



ST. AUGUSTINE *

St. Augustine—A Land of the Long Ago—A Chat with a Spanish Antiquity—Quaint Streets—City Gate—Fort Marion—The Old Slave Market—The Monuments—The Plaza—Cathedral and Convent



ANOTHER morning breaks, a worthy successor to the last; it seems made up of some heavenly alchemy—a tissue of golden glory and shimmer of silver sheen. Over the silent sea and yet more silent land a supreme stillness reigns, unbroken by the rustle of leaves or whirr of the invisible insect world. The great sun hangs like a ball of fire in the pale skies, and fills the land with dazzling light. The green earth, with all her wealth of fruit and flowers in her lap, seems wrapt in a sweet languor, as though she had fallen asleep and was smiling in her dreams; while her giant sons of the forest and straggling children of the plains lift their leafy fingers to their lips, and whisper to the wandering wind, "Hush! she is weary, let her rest," and the red roses and white lilies nod their heads drowsily and sleep with her. The very dogs doze dreamily in the sun; they do n't seem to have a good honest bark or vigorous wag of the tail left in them. Life—the busy, bustling, nineteenth-century life we know of—exists not here. We feel as

* The following chapter, taken from a book entitled "Down South," written by Lady Duffus Hardy, and published in 1880, is inserted by permission of the author.

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though we had gone to sleep in the world of to-day and been carried away in our dreams, and woke up in an ancient city of two hundred years ago.

This dear, romantic St. Augustine! It is not grim with age, nor gray and hoary with the rust of time. It is like an old-fashioned beauty who has been lying in state through these long years, pranked in all her finery of feathers, furbelows, paint, powder, and patches, and now wakes up and walks and talks with us in the quaint stilted phraseology of old days. Never was change of time and place so sudden, so strangely felt, as the transition from brilliant Jacksonville and pretty, pleasant Fernandina to this quiet, quaint old-world city, wherein the dignity and simple grace of the Spanish cavaliers who first conquered, settled and peopled it, seems still to linger; we can almost fancy we see their shadowy forms stoop their plumed heads as they pass in and out of their ancient homes, with gilt spurs jangling and swords clanging at their heels. We are steeped to the lips in the spirit of the middle ages all round us, and everywhere we recognize the features and individualities of days dead and gone.

The hotels, built expressly for the service of the traveling world, are the only touches of modern life we find herein—no other thing of modern birth dares lift its head in St. Augustine. As a rule the inhabitants seem made to match the place—indeed, they are a part of it. Many are the descendants of the early settlers, and they and their fathers before them have lived there all their days, and still occupy the ancient dwellings of their race.

Passing by one of these old coquina homes, I saw an old Spaniard sitting in the porch smoking his pipe, while his granddaughter, a bright-eyed brunette, sat rocking her baby by his side, while an immense fuschia tree in full bloom shook out its crimson flowers above them. I stopped to inquire the way to the "city gate." He rose up, tall, straight, erect to his full height, over six feet, doffed his cap, and with the stately courtesy of his race came down, leaned over the fence, and directed us on our way, adding:—

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"You're strangers, I think? A good many come here nowadays."

We were in no hurry to go on; seeing he was conversationally inclined, we gratified him, and ourselves likewise; we lingered for a pleasant chat—one gains so much in these wayside gatherings. He volunteered some bits of interesting information about the place, about his family, and about himself. I made some touristical observation about the appearance of the city and its salubrious situation, and inquired how long he had lived there.

"I was born with the century," he said, "and I was born here in this very house I live in."

"Why, you don't look like eighty years of age," I remark.

"No, nor I don't feel like it, lady," he answered; "but I'm in my eighty-second year, and I feel hale and strong yet. I've lived through some troublous times, too; it has n't always been fair weather here in St. Augustine."

Seeing we were interested in anything concerning St. Augustine, and anxious to glean any scraps of information, he opened the gate and invited us to "walk in" and rest. As we were scarcely a hundred yards from our hotel we did not want to "rest," but we walked in nevertheless and sat down in the porch and prepared for a gossip; it was easy to lead him to talk of the old days, he seemed to enjoy fighting his battle of life over again.

"Yes, I've seen a good many changes," he said, warming to his work. "Few men have lived a life out on one spot and seen so much—so many revolutions, things, thoughts, governments and people changing, but the place remaining just the same; there's been no pulling down old landmarks in St. Augustine, and the wear and tear of time isn't much. You see the city is all built of coquina, and that is stronger than stone—the older it is the harder it becomes. Yes, I've seen the British flag flying from the old fort, the Spanish banner flying; now we are under the eagle's wing, and the stars and stripes are fluttering over us."

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"I suppose you would as soon live under one rule as another?" I venture to say.

"Provided they rule well, yes; and we've nothing to complain of now; the laws are easy, and we are left to live and work in peace, though up to the last few years we've been liable to hostile incursions of the Indians. Why, I've seen them swarm over the bastions yonder, and come whooping and yelling through the streets, filling the air with their hideous war-cry—such scenes, dear ladies, as I dare not tell you of; now we are under the American flag, and, the Blessed Lord be thanked, we are at peace."

He took us through his orchard at the back of the house, and on to a small orange grove of about an acre, which he proudly informed us he managed all himself. We gathered and ate some oranges—deliciously cool and refreshing they were; he apologized for their size and scarcity, as the trees had been stripped of their finest fruit some weeks ago.

As yet we had only caught a general view of St. Augustine, and we hurried on to make acquaintance with its special features. The streets are narrow and crooked, varying from ten to twenty feet wide, the houses having verandas or balconies jutting out overhead so close together that the ladies thereon can almost shake hands across from one side of the road to the other. There are no regular pavements or sidewalks, and the roads are laid with broken oyster or mussel shells. The houses are mostly built of a kind of compressed shell-stone called "coquina," which is quarried from the island of Anastasia, that lies about a mile across the harbor and separates St. Augustine from the Atlantic Ocean. This is the oldest European settlement in America, and was settled long before the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers. The most picturesque and romantic of all the quaint old streets is St. George street, with its curious houses and hanging balconies clinging along the fronts thereof, which are generally covered with climbing plants. The white coquina walls rise straight and bare direct from the roadway; the windows are small and closely curtained, as though the old Spanish dons still jealously guarded

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their hidden beauties from the sight of man. There is an air of great seclusion everywhere—we might be wandering through an Oriental city; but we know that behind these bare walls there are blooming gardens of oleander, magnolia, orange and lemon trees; occasionally we get a glimpse of some rich striped lily or glowing passion-flower nodding over the wall.

Mr. Lorillard has a beautiful villa here—a touch of to-day in the land of the yesterdays. It is of quaint though modern architecture, and is full of gable ends and corners. The smooth-shaven lawn and flower gardens are simply railed in and in full view of the passer-by. Whichever way you turn you catch a breath of poetry and romance; a scent of the days gone by clings round the ancient homes and pervades the air, having a subtle effect upon our spirits. We fancy we hear the clang of arms, and the long-silent voices ringing in the air, and shadowy forms are gliding beside us, haunting the old scenes where they walked and talked so many centuries ago.

At the top of St. George street stands the ancient city gate, which once formed part of the old stone wall which, running from shore to shore, protected the city from hostile incursions. The greater part of the wall has long since disappeared, but a rude, rugged, moss-covered mass clings around, as though it helped to support the tall ornamental towers which once rose up on each side of the city gate, and which still stand massive and strong, like sentinels who will not be beaten from their post, though a great gap yawns where the gate has fallen from its rusty hinges. Coming through St. George street we look straight through to the wide stretches of country beyond. The sentry boxes scooped out of the solid wall are there still, exactly as when the last guard stepped from them in obedience to the bugle call, when the sun had set and the sentry was relieved. This is, perhaps, the most ancient and certainly the most picturesque ruin in this portion of the country.

Passing between the still stately towers we come in full view of Fort Marion, one of the most attractive features of St. Augustine. It was com-

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menced in the year 1592, but was not completed till the year 1756. It is a remarkable, fine, and imposing structure—grand, gray and massive, standing on a gently rising hill outside the town, and lifting its gloomy front towards the sea. No ruin is Fort Marion, but perfect in all its parts, stamped only with the desolation and dreariness which must brood over any place that is deserted and unused for a certain number of years.

The labor of construction is said to have been wholly performed by negro slaves and prisoners of war. The moat is now dried up and overgrown with grass and rank weeds; but there are the draw-bridges, the massive arched entrance, the barbican, the dark passages, frowning bastions, and mysterious dungeons. A whiskered sergeant—a remnant of military glory—has charge of the fort, and lives in a pretty, rose-covered cottage outside. In company with several other tourists we explored the curiosities of the old fort. One large dingy stone chamber, with vaulted roof and damp floor, like a gigantic cellar, was occupied by the townspeople, who came flocking to the fort for shelter, some few years ago, when the place was threatened by an irregular army of piratical marauders; the ashen embers where they baked their last loaf of bread still lie upon the iron plate, and the empty oven yawns hungrily open. This apartment, itself but dimly lighted, leads into a huge, dark dungeon, black as Erebus; but *the* "dark dungeon" *par excellence* lies beyond, and to this treat-in-store we proceed. Chill, black, and dismal as the grave, is this partly-underground dungeon, where in 1835 two skeletons were found chained to the wall—victims, no doubt, to some cruel Spanish inquisition. We stand shivering in its chilly blackness while our guide gives us fragmentary sketches of the history of the fort. The last prisoners confined here were a number of refractory Indians, stirrers-up of trouble, horse-thieves, and general marauders, who were sent hither by the order of United States Government in 1874, but were released in 1878. In no cruel dungeon like this "dark cell," however, were these "braves" confined. A large, casemated chamber was prepared for their reception; they were taken out in squads for exercise, and under proper surveillance were even

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allowed to bathe. They have left their sign-manual upon the walls—specimens of Indian art in the shape of sundry sprawly sketches of man and beast. For, as is well known, the Indians are fond of drawing, and will draw on anything and with any kind of material that will make a mark. They will even exchange a surplus squaw for a few pencils or paint brushes. Crude and out of all proportions as their productions are, they illustrate the minds and peculiar proclivities of the people. An Indian never represents himself as standing, dancing, or walking; he is always on horseback, and always fighting against fabulous numbers, and always a conqueror, riding victorious over a score of prostrate foes. We pass through an antique chapel, whence the worshipers have fled “into the silent land” and left it deserted except for the ghostly echo which rises up and follows us as we pass through. We peep through dusky passages, ramble up and down crumbling stone stairs, cross the barbican, pass many worm-eaten oaken doors which, we are told, “lead nowhere in particular,” and presently emerge upon the grassy, battlemented slopes of the old fortification and look out across the bay, over the island of Anastasia, to the sea beyond. After wandering for a brief period through these gloomy precincts, and inhaling the damp, imprisoned air of the dungeons, it is pleasant to stand in the sunlight and breathe the fresh air of heaven again. We promenade the battlements and look down upon the lovely fort with barbicans and towers, esplanades, draw-bridges, and grass-grown moat spread out before and around us. Lifting the eyes and gazing further off we have a magnificent land and sea view, with the quaint old city with its lovely gardens grouped at our feet.

We meet many other promenaders who, like ourselves, appreciate the glorious view, except in some cases when the view is bounded by a sun-bonnet on one side and a wide sombrero, shading a bearded masculine face, upon the other. There was Darby enjoying the evening air, with his fat wife Joan trudging by his side; and here was a tall young lady of Amazonian deportment solemnly parading side by side with her latest conquest—a small, meek young man, who had evidently no strength

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to resist capture and could not close his ears to the voice of the charmer. He wore spectacles and a blue necktie, reminding one somewhat of a pet sheep being led by a blue ribbon; one half expected to hear him reply with a soft "Baa—aa" to the tender tones of his lady-love. Now in turning a shady corner we come upon a pair of time-honored flirts, who have left their youth a long way behind them, and are now shooting their blunt little arrows at one another: both well practiced, and evidently little damage is done on either side.

Descending presently from our vantage ground, we turn our backs upon the romantic old fort, looking so gray and lonesome in the sunlight; its glories have passed away, and its peaceful solitudes have become the haunt of tourists and travelers; the green lizards swarm in its sunny corners, and men and women linger through long summer evenings in its shady nooks, and make love beneath its frowning battlements. We pass along the sea wall, which is of coquina, like most of the buildings here, and is about a mile long, forming a magnificent promenade; it is elevated above the roadway, and being only two feet wide it gives no encouragement to the "gay and festive throng," or social gathering on moonlit evenings. People generally march in single file and take the air in a solemn business-like fashion, though occasionally a pair of young, slim creatures cling together and walk side by side, by no means inclined to carp at the narrowness of the wall, which compels one's arm to slide round the other's waist, and with a kind of forced pressure to "hold on" to save the other from falling. On one side is the water, still as a lake, yet indescribably seeming to breathe the "salt sweet fragrance" of the vast Atlantic beyond.

The pretty vessels of the yachting club, with white sails fluttering, are courtesying to their own shadows on its surface. On the other side, about three feet below the sea wall, is a wide, smooth, shell road; where you may enjoy a delightful drive or promenade *au cheval*; here and there are stone steps leading up to the wall, so that you are not obliged to march along its whole length, or leap down at the risk of breaking your neck. Fronting the water on the other side of the road is Bay street, the principal

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business thoroughfare of the city, where there are some excellent shops, and queer old houses which take boarders all the year round, for the winter cold, or summer heat, is never excessive in St. Augustine; it is one of the few Floridian resorts which is pleasant at all seasons. The temperature, calculated by a study of the thermometer for the last ten years, is for summer about 80 Fahrenheit; autumn, 70 to 75; winter, 58 to 60—a most delightful temperature, especially as there is generally a soft balmy east wind blowing, though occasionally in the winter time a wild north-easter, in its fiercest mood, sweeps over the Atlantic, and wreaks its vengeance on St. Augustine and the surrounding coast. People are inclined to smash the thermometer which dares to register only sixty when this cruel wind is biting them through!

At the other end of the sea-wall, opposite the fort, are the United States Barracks, jutting out at the water side; there is generally a regiment stationed here, when the band plays every day at five o'clock during the season. Although this quaint dreamy old city is but a small place, there is much of interest to be seen here.

There is the "Plaza de la Constitucion," where the good Christians burnt their brethren a century ago; it is a large square, laid out with grass plots, and flower beds, with paths cut through, leading from one side of the Plaza to the other. In the centre stands the curious old market-place, roofed in at the top, but open on all sides; this was the ancient slave-mart, where "God's image, carved in ebony," was bought and sold in most ungodly fashion; there is the place where they stood, ranged in rows like cattle in a pen, so that their purchasers might walk to and fro examining them from all points to see that they had their money's worth. They sit there now, these self-same slaves of the old days, with bright kerchiefs round their heads, surrounded by fruits and flowers, buying and selling on their own account, laughing, chaffing, bargaining with one another with the easy air that freedom gives. Close by is the graceful monument erected by the ladies of St. Augustine to the Confederate dead, whose names are carved upon the shaft. No matter how impoverished the land may have

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been, how ruined the people, in every Southern city, small or great, they have found money enough to erect a monument,—some most costly, some poetic, and all more or less artistic, to those who—

“Fell while wearing the gray for them!”

There is another monument, somewhat weather-beaten, erected by the Spaniards to commemorate the adoption of the Spanish institutions in 1812. Then there is the gray old rookery of a convent, where the withered old sisters sit forever making lace—wondrous fine lace it is, and produced in such large quantities we wonder who buys it all. Fronting on the Plaza, also, is the old cathedral, with its quaint Moorish belfry, and still more quaint and ancient peal of bells, one of which bears the stamp of 1682. It is not much regarded from an architectural point of view, its antiquity is everything. Partly facing the Plaza, and partly facing the sea breezes, stands the St. Augustine Hotel. We preferred the “Magnolia,” though its position is perhaps not so good; it stands in the centre of that queer crooked St. George street, and is as pretty and picturesque as, considering its name, it ought to be, with odd turns and angles, verandas clinging everywhere covered with blooming flowers, and beautiful magnolias and banana trees in the delicious straggly old garden. The magnolias are not yet in bloom, but from their nest of leafy buds we catch a glimpse of the creamy flower, and the long purplish crimson leaves of the banana still shield the golden fruit from too quick maturity. The oleander is already covered with its luxuriance of crimson, pearly pink, and waxen white bloom, and the Japan plum tree laden with juicy fruit.

Stepping out on the veranda in the early morning we find everybody sucking oranges in the most solemn business-like fashion. The gentlemen go at it with a will, and generally work through a whole basketful of the golden fruit; they make a hole at one end and suck with inflated cheeks, like a bevy of ancient cherubs blowing a trumpet, and suck in sweet silence, seemingly oblivious of all that is passing round them as they take their morning dose of this delicious nectar. Some of the ladies peel them with white slim fingers, and extract the juice as

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daintily as the bee extracts honey from the flower; some of the uncompromising feminine family, "who have no nonsense about them," pull the orange to pieces, mangle its delicate tissues, and disembowel it with ruthless teeth. Some work as though they were sucking for a wager, and others go through their heap with slow, solemn enjoyment. Those who have not eaten a fresh gathered orange in Florida don't know what an orange is.

All around in the neighborhood of St. Augustine are lovely orange groves, and long avenues with cedar hedges, and grand old mulberry trees with gnarled and knotted trunks, and heavy branches, that look as antiquated as the city itself. Being desirous of entering into, and spending a little time in the inspection of some one of the many noted orange groves, we were directed to one owned by a prominent citizen, who would, we were assured, "make us right welcome;" and armed with cards of introduction we took our way to his residence. Passing along a magnificent avenue of stately trees, which bordered his extensive grounds, and closed above our heads, shutting the sunlight out, we came to the large iron entrance gate. There was a bell, and we rang it, but nobody answered it except a large white cat, who emerged from a shrubbery, and rubbed against the gate purring and arching her back ingratiatingly as if inviting us to enter. Finding no response except this feline welcome, we pushed open the gate and walked up to the house, the cat purring a congratulatory purr at our heels, as if she was very glad indeed that we had come. We ascended the "stoop" (*Anglicè*, door steps), and rang the hall-door bell. No answer. We amused ourselves ringing at intervals; and when we were tired of tinkling the bell, which seemed to wake sepulchral echoes, we started on a tour of inspection around the house. It seemed as dead asleep as the Sleeping Beauty; its eyes were all shut, the sun-blinds all rigorously closed. There were seats on the piazza, and we rested for a while in the fragrant shadow of a great appopinac tree, whose showers of dainty yellow blossoms fell like an odorous golden rain upon the grass, while the fairy flowers of the azalea, light as drifted snow-flakes, stirred as

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if breathing soft mysteries in the whispering balmy breeze. Meanwhile the cat jumped up on my lap and went asleep, until we started afresh on an exploration of the grounds; then our feline friend escorted us, her comfortable and contented purr allaying the apprehensions of ferocious mastiffs which invariably beset us in strange quarters, though our secondary dread of steel man-traps, set for more harmful intruders than ourselves, kept us cautiously within the boundaries of the gravel walks.

We found tool-sheds, arbors, bowers, stables, chicken-houses, dog-kennels and cottages, but not a sign of life except a portly hen and a brood of chickens who fled to their coop at sight of our soft snowflake of an escort, whose emerald eyes dilated, and affectionate purring ceased at sight of them. Having explored the more domestic portion of the grounds, and still finding nobody to show us through the orange plantation, we proceeded to show ourselves through it. Is there a tree, I wonder, more beautiful than the orange, with its shining foliage of dark and glossy green, its scented snow of blossoms, its red-gold globes of fruit! Here in St. Augustine, although too late in the season for the fullest beauty of the groves—the gathering being almost over—we still found here and there the flower and the fruit growing amicably together on sister boughs. We came upon one glorious tree, its graceful branches bending under the rich burden of its fruit of fiery gold, glowing in that southern sunshine. We reached down a laden bough, and trespassed on the taken-for-granted hospitality of our unknown and unknowing host to the extent of an orange apiece.

Long had we yearned to taste an orange plucked fresh from the tree! Often had we anticipated the unrivalled freshness of the gushing juice of the fruit yet warm to the heart with sunshine, and exhaling still the fragrance of the dews of morning! Now we had got our oranges, "fresh from the tree—dew, sunshine, etc., etc.," at last. We tasted the long anticipated delicacy. Ugh! our dainty morsel turned out to be the bitter rind, the biting acrid juice, of that species known as the "sour orange!" What an excellent moral might have been deduced from this Dead Sea fruit of

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our desires! It was a sermon in a bite! But, unfortunately, there was nobody to whom to preach it, except the cat. We threw our oranges far, far away, sadder and wiser women. But the daughters of Eve are incorrigible, and, anon, we built our dreams again around a "fresh mango," and were again disillusioned. Yet unconvinced by many disenchantments, we still go on through life seeking our mango or our orange, "fresh from the tree."

But that afternoon's peregrination is still one of our pleasantest memories of St. Augustine.

There are plenty of amusements and resorts in and around this quaint, mediæval-looking old place to entertain the tourist, when he has sufficiently taken into himself the aspect of this bit of the Middle Ages dropped down in the modern bay of the bright New World.

When you have seen all that St. Augustine itself has to show you, you may, with much profit and interest, extend your wandering, and cross over to inspect the coquina quarries and the fine lighthouse on St. Anastasia's Island, when the solitary keepers will, perhaps, tell you some stirring incidents of their lonely lives; or you may sail down to the wonderful sulphur spring, which boils up from the ocean—its pale blue sulphurous water forcing its way through a hundred and forty feet of the salt sea waves. The current is at times so strong (for the spring is intermittent), that a short time ago one of the coast survey steamers was floated over the "boil" of it!

There is another delightful excursion passing through the city gate, over a smooth pleasant road, till you turn off to San Sebastian Beach, which forms a pleasant drive for many miles, when you may see the ruins of some old palisades, which at one time connected Fort Monsa with a stockade at San Sebastian. The excursion need only occupy a few hours; unless you choose to linger by the way, you may return to St. Augustine in time for dinner.

There are plenty of occupations wherewith gentlemen may beguile the pleasant hours. They can indulge in shooting and fishing expeditions on

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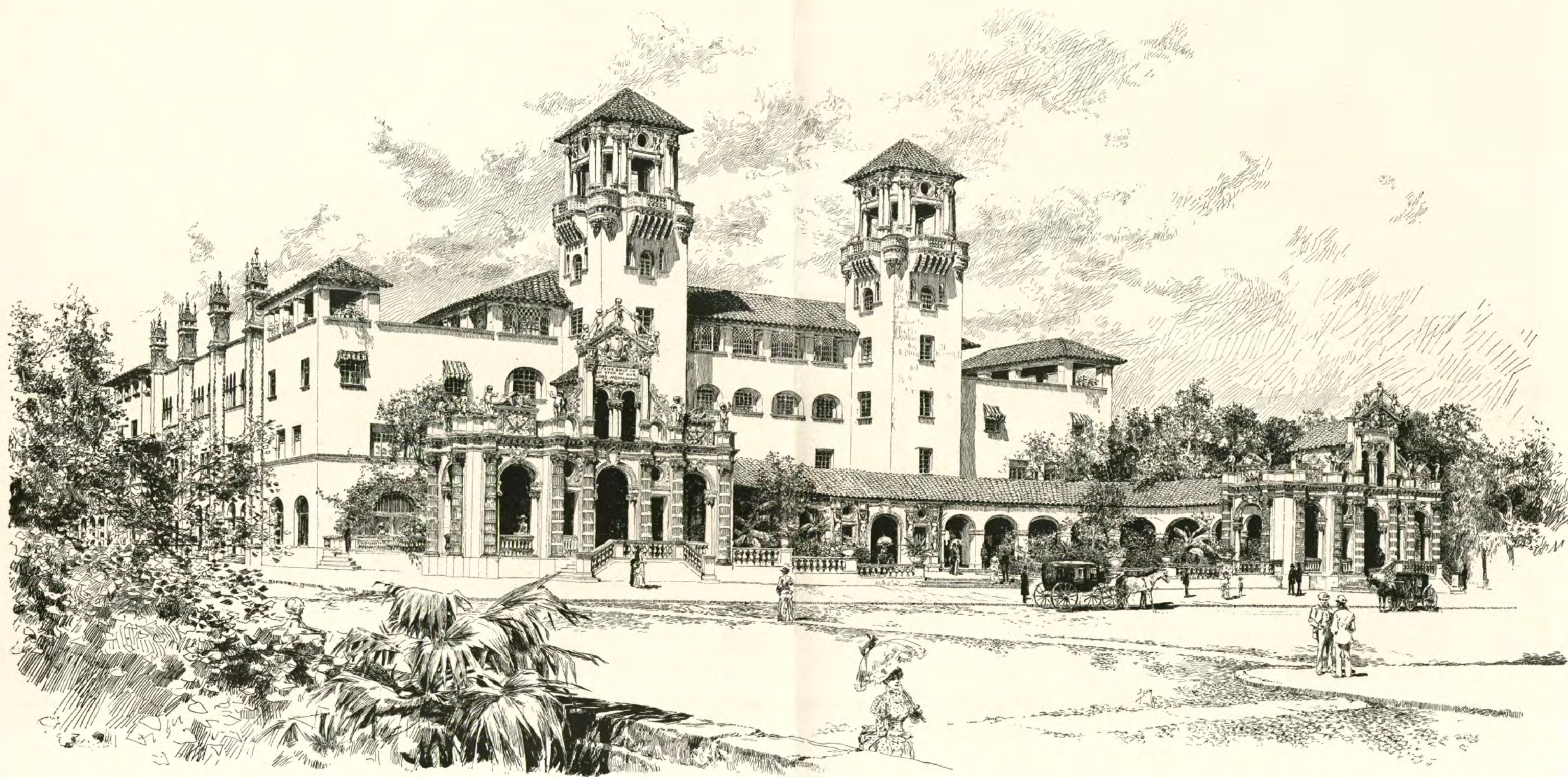
the banks of the Matanzas River, and shoot their own game, catch their own fish, and cook their own dinners. It is not an uncommon thing for ladies to join in these excursions. They enjoy playing at "being gypsies" for a season; they soon tire of it.

On one balmy morning early we turn our backs upon the sweet-scented old-world city, and take the little fussy, jog-trot train back to Tocol, carrying with us a host of pleasant memories of this delicious, dreamy, romantic St. Augustine.



Carrère & Hastings, Architects
New York

HOTEL PONCE DE LEON—ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA



Carrère & Hastings, Architects
New York

THE ALCAZAR—ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

The Ponce de Leon

The Alcazar



THE PONCE DE LEON—THE ALCAZAR



HERE is a general supposition that using the weather as a stimulant to conversation is merely a convention, tacitly agreed upon by polite society. This is a fallacy to be exploded. Weather controls conversation simply because it controls everything else. Climate is sovereign. Climate rules religion, character, cuisine and architecture. If you go to Rome, why must you do as the Romans do? The answer is simple enough—the climate makes you. You may resist all you please, but climate will conquer in the end. What is a Yankee but John Bull plus the American climate? I challenge any one to give a better example of the transforming power of King Weather.

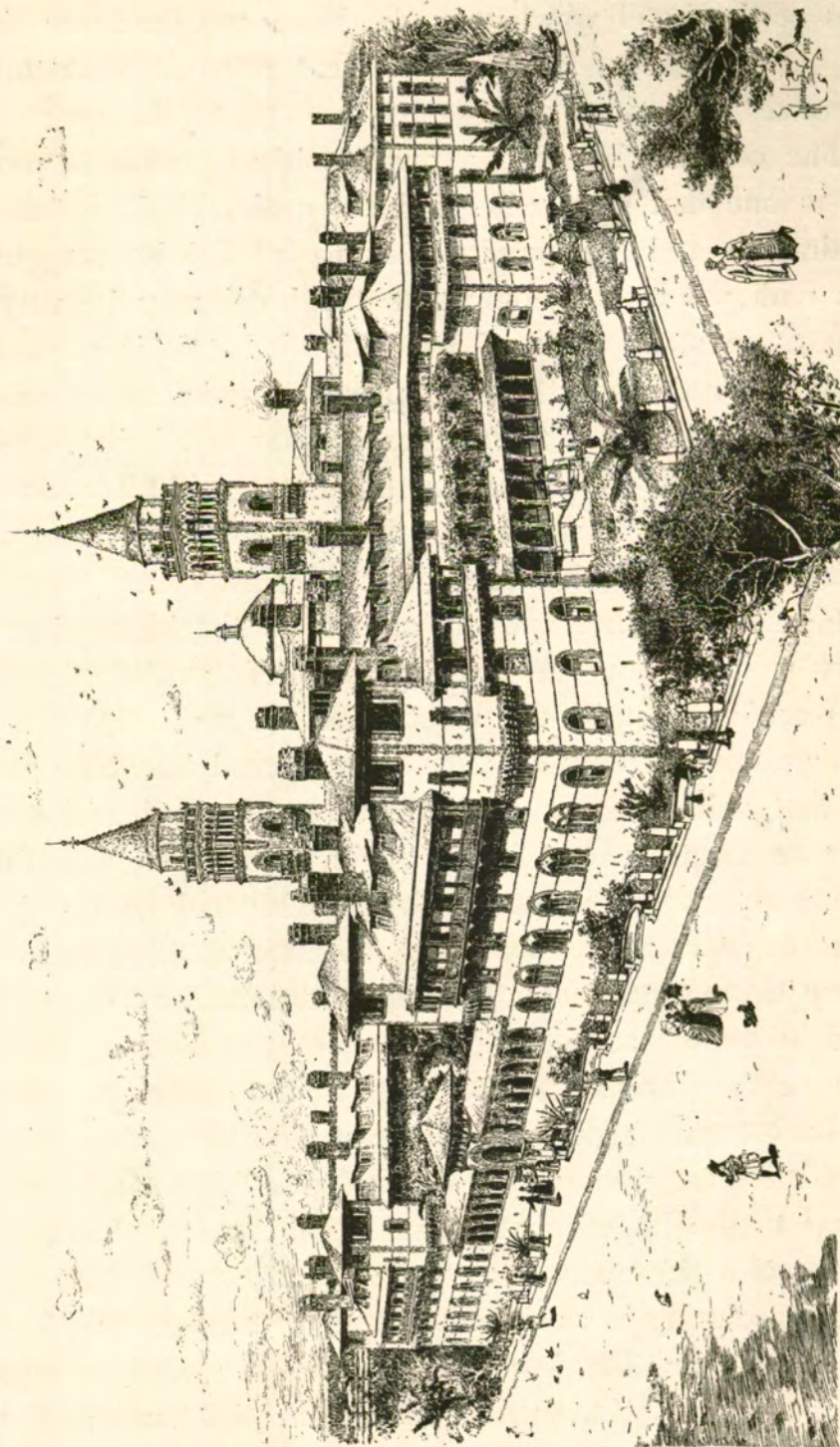
As our tourist strolls from the new station along King street, with its weird live oaks, hung with gray moss, under which there lies a tangled thicket of roses and vines, he begins at once to yield to the strange, new influences about him. The sky is of a softer yet more intense blue, the sun seems to shine and glow for each one in a personal way, while the air is at once balmy and languorous.

It will not take long to get a general idea of St. Augustine. It

THE PONCE DE LEON

lies on an irregular peninsula formed by the San Sebastian River and the arm of the sea, also called the Matanzas. The new station is near the San Sebastian River and from there to the harbor is little more than a quarter of a mile. Going along King street we pass the Moorish Villa, then between the two huge hotels, the Ponce de Leon and the Alcazar, of which we are soon to speak. Here crossing a broad road and continuing we have the Casa Monica on one side and the Government Grounds on the other. This brings us to the Plaza, dotted with trees, with its picturesque Spanish cathedral, Slave Market, and quaint old Spanish houses, with their overhanging loggias, surrounding it. You see it has not taken us long to get to the sea, or rather to the arm of the sea between the peninsula and the long, low Anastasia Island which lies a mile off and forms a barrier to the ocean beyond. To our right and left lies old St. Augustine—a tangled mass of narrow, crooked streets, with overhanging balconies, cool corridors and arched verandas. All about us there are suggestions of Spain, but it is Spain accommodating itself to the Florida climate. The balconies are hung with tropical vines, and bright roses greet us everywhere. Memories of the old, shadowy days of Ponce de Leon come to the mind as one strolls along the harbor promenade towards the city gates. One idly wonders at what point Don Pedro de Menendez landed that September morning three hundred years ago, when he took possession of the country in the name of his king, Philip II. of Spain. Not far off rises Fort Marion, or the Castle of St. Mark, the most conspicuous reminder of the long Spanish occupation.

Everybody who has traveled at all knows the leisurely pleasure of the first aimless stroll in a place where he expects to settle down for a few weeks. On arriving one goes to the hotel, stopping only long enough to see his rooms, and then at once steps out to get a bird's-eye view of the new city. But the first stroll is never long, and after a turn up this street and down that, an identification of one or two of the "lions," and a glimpse at a famous view, the traveler invariably



HOTEL PONCE DE LEON—SOUTH AND EAST FRONTS

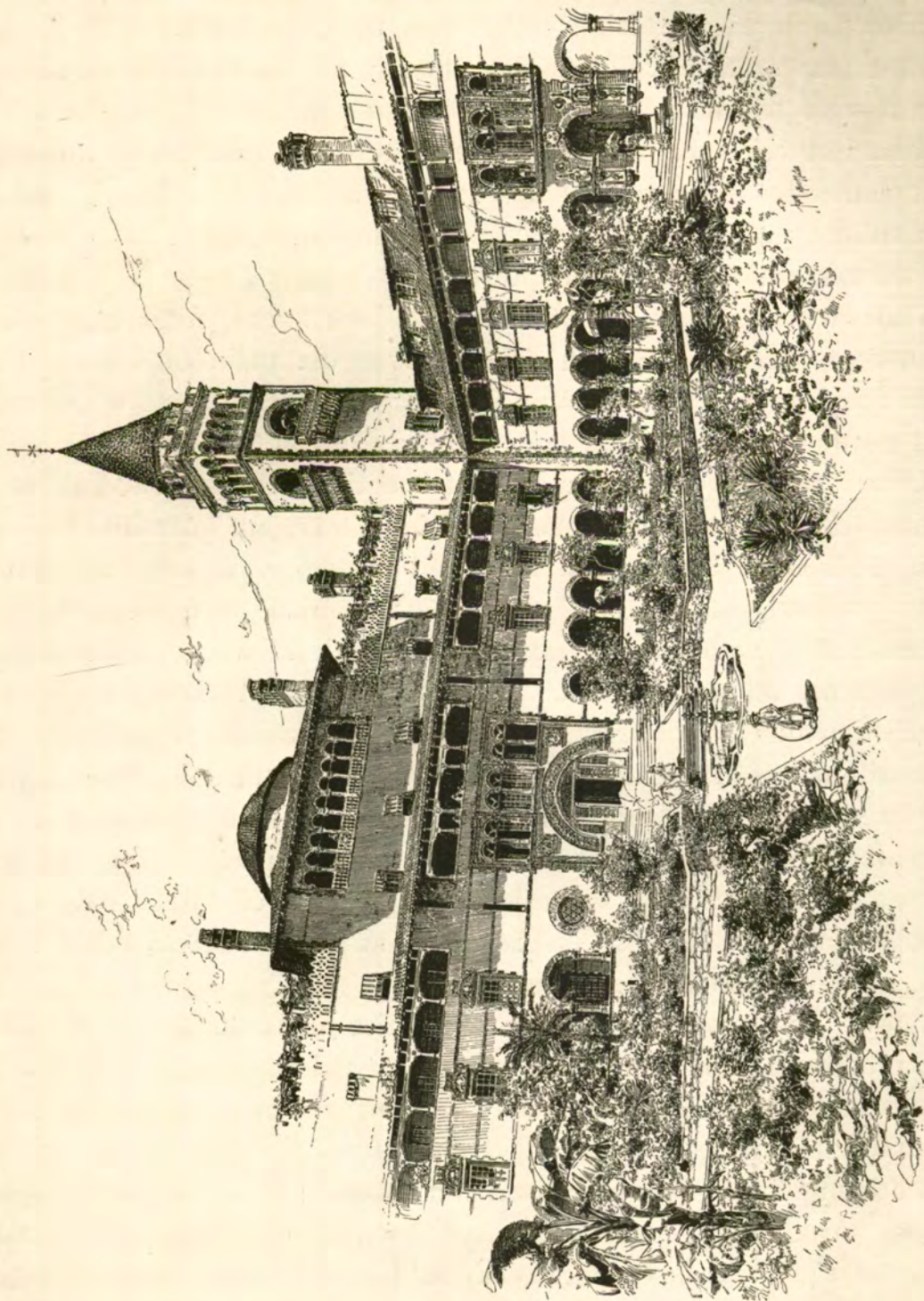
THE PONCE DE LEON

thinks of the hotel which is to be his home for some time. Such has been our glimpse of St. Augustine, and now we must turn back towards the Ponce de Leon.

The contrast between a quaint old city and its most comfortable hotel is one that generally produces a shock. It is like going from a cathedral to a huge bandbox or to a slightly exaggerated Saratoga trunk with windows. Sometimes the hotel may be very fair architecturally, as in some parts of Switzerland, but it is an architecture quite repugnant to the spirit of the place. Specimens of this exotic architecture have obtruded themselves on our stroll, in the shape of smart little Queen Anne villas, with an impudent gable here and a meaningless turret there, strongly suggesting that Queen Anne has gone staring mad and has attired herself like a dude on Easter Day.

If, as has been remarked, climate is the king of architecture, then history is its queen. A building can defy neither the natural features of a place nor yet its old associations. As we return to the Ponce de Leon and the Alcazar, at which we glanced hurriedly before, we see at once that neither Spain nor Florida are to be banished from us. The Ponce de Leon is built in the style of the early Spanish Renaissance, which was strongly influenced by the Moorish spirit. What strikes us at first, of course, is its vast size and then its picturesque outlines. The country about is flat and monotonous, hence our building must be as varied in outline as possible. The eye travels from the gateway in the centre of the one-story portico up to the corner turrets of the wings, then back to the high walls of the main part of the building, and up to the great dome surmounted by its graceful lantern, and so finally on and up to the huge corner towers that rise one hundred and fifty feet into the clear blue sky.

The coloring is as rich and varied as the outline. The main material used for the building—towers and all—is a shell composite of a light mother-of-pearl color, that glitters in the sun and turns to dark blue the shadows cast upon it by the deep reveals. In contrast with



HOTEL PONCE DE LEON—VIEW OF MAIN COURT

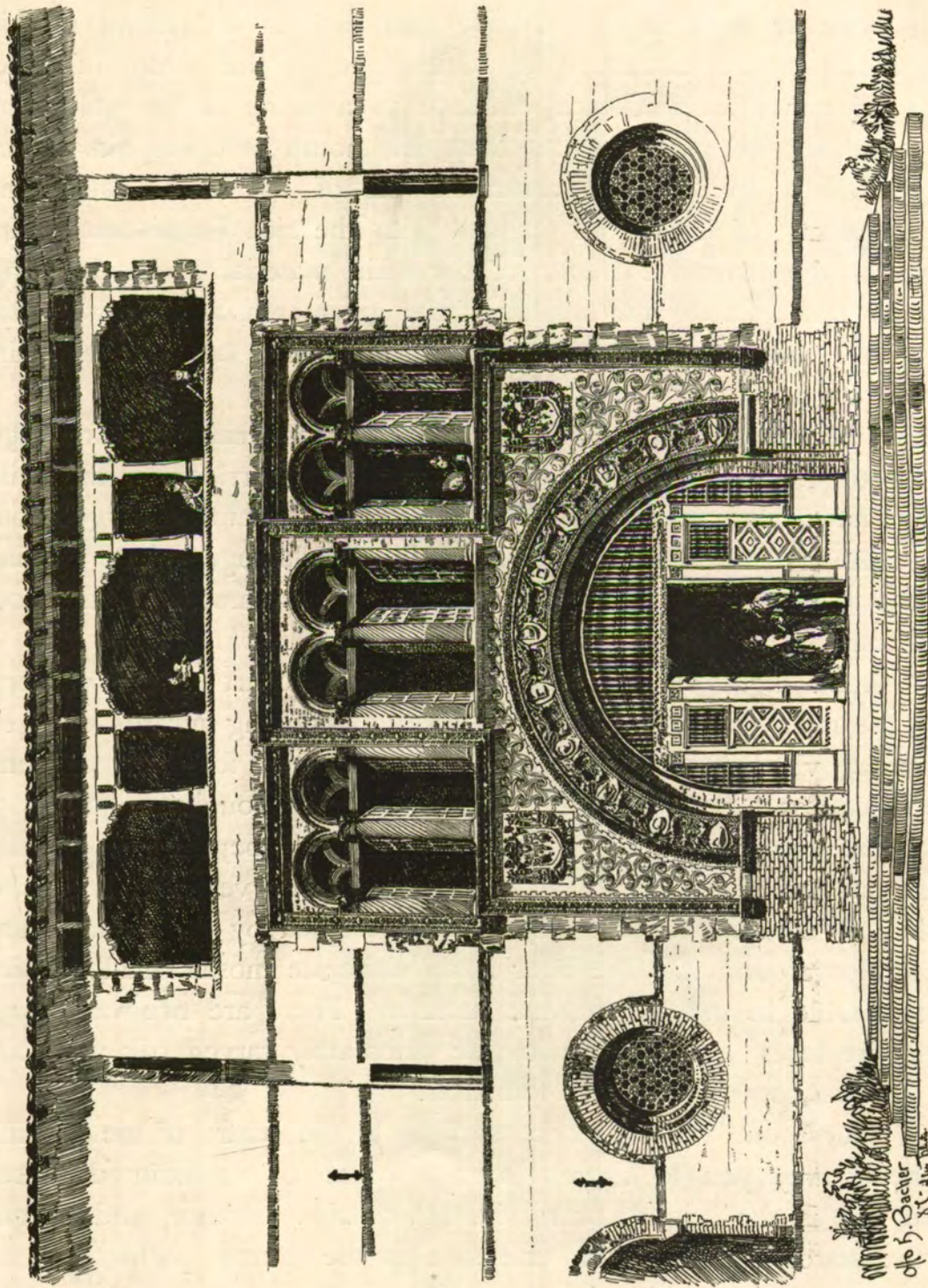
THE PONCE DE LEON

the main coloring is the bright salmon of the terra cotta, which is the material of the ornamentation. This is very rich on the towers and in the court—indeed the balconies high up on the towers are of solid terra cotta and weigh five tons apiece—but the outer walls of the building are simpler, following a rule of this style of architecture, and the lively salmon coloring appears only in the coignes, in the arches of the windows and verandas, and in the corner towers.

While we are speaking of color we must not forget the dark Spanish roof tiles or the rich faïence over the main entrance. The loggias overhanging the different façades, with their quaint woodwork, remind us of similar ones we have observed in the old town.

Before entering the court we must notice that the building is a monolith. A mile away, on Anastasia Island, there are quantities of tiny broken shells that you can run like sand through your fingers. Thousands of carloads of this shell deposit or coquina were brought over and then mixed with cement, six parts of shell to one of cement, the whole forming an indestructible composite. It is not exact to say that the hotel was *built*; it was *cast*. For there is not a joint in the building; the material was made on the spot, poured in while still soft and rammed down three inches at a time. Thus the great building conforms in its very material to the natural conditions of the place. The coquina, found almost on the very spot, was a suggestion of nature not to be overlooked, and the hotel seems far more at home than it would were it built of brown stone from Ohio.

But we must now pass under the portico and enter the court. The first impression is one of tropical splendor. Palms, vines, roses, as well as plants and flowers strange to a Northerner, fill the great court, which, by the way, is 150 feet square. The half of the court towards the entrance being lower than the other, you ascend by various short flights of steps. Around the court runs a corridor. Opposite the outside entrance is the great, low archway through which you enter the hotel. "Ponce de Leon" is the legend that runs around the arch—carved on



HOTEL PONCE DE LEON—MAIN ENTRANCE OF HOTEL

Wm. B. Baer
St. Louis, Mo.

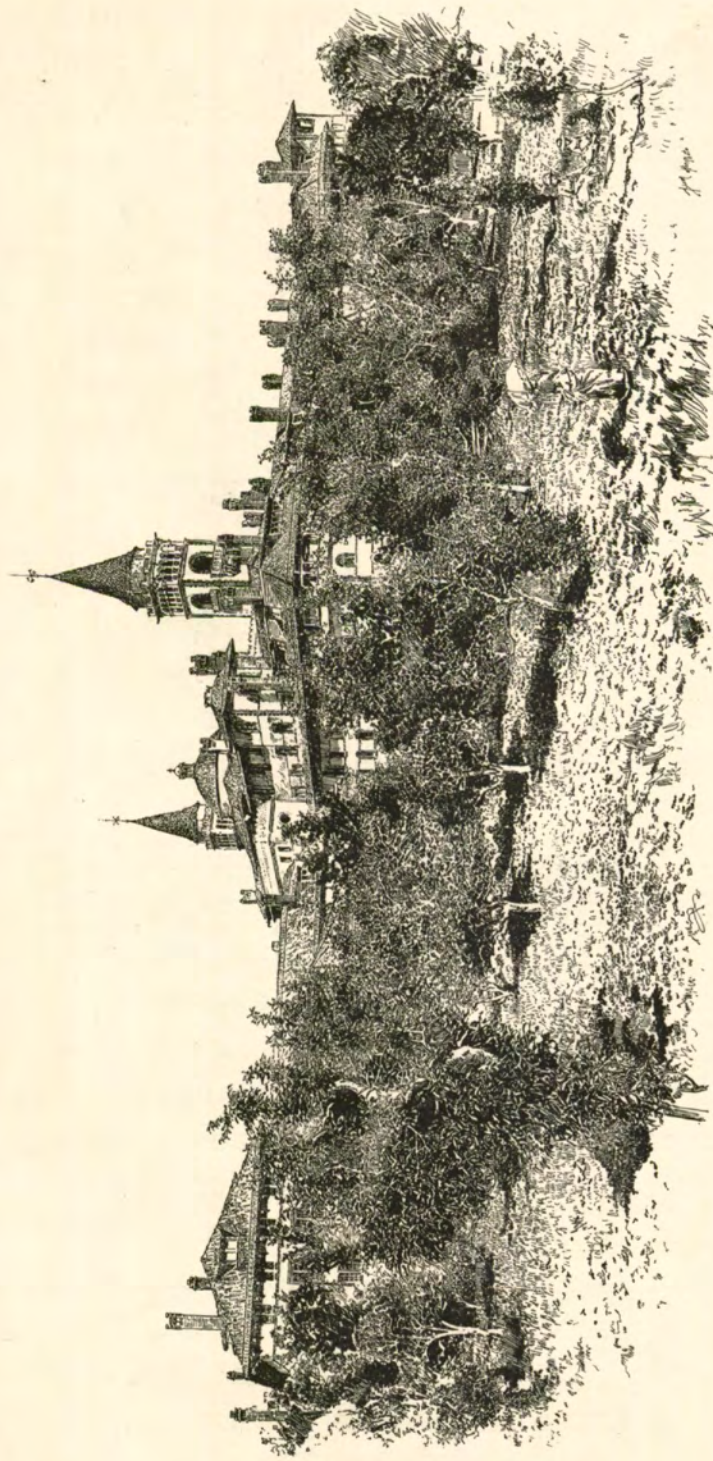
THE PONCE DE LEON

shields, a letter to a shield. Above this arch is a brilliant mosaic. There are also two entrances for ladies, one in the centre of either wing. On either side of each entrance in a niche in the wall there is a fountain. The water issues from the mouth of a dolphin, carved in high relief. Indeed, the ornamentation of the whole court—and there is plenty of it and all imbued with the rich Renaissance spirit—suggests the marine character of the main material of the building. Mermaids sport among the shields of the great arch, and shells appear everywhere. Notice also the scrolls here and there, carved with quaint Spanish proverbs.

But the unique feature of the court is the great grille, or cage, rising from the top of each side entrance to the corridor of the third story. These two cages are filled with climbing plants and gorgeous flowers, among which flash birds of brilliant plumage; thus we find carried out on the very walls the richly tropical character of the floor of the court.

A broad flight of steps ascends from the court to the platform before the main entrance. Standing here and looking inwards, one gets a charming vista. You have before you almost a forest of columns, some of oak and some of marble; for you look through the pillars of the vestibule to the caryatides of the rotunda and beyond these to the columns at the entrance of the dining-room. The vestibule is rich in marbles. We now enter the huge space occupied by the rotunda and the corridor around it. The floor is an elaborate mosaic made of tiny bits of marble in the Renaissance manner. There are two very large marble fireplaces, contrasting with the elaborately carved oak wainscoting. In two corners there are fountains.

Of course one walks at once straight to the centre of the rotunda. Whichever way you look, you have a sense of splendid distances. Before you is the bright court, with the outside entrance, and beyond this the stately Alcazar. On one side is the grand parlor, on the other a long hallway, with the main office, (which also opens on to the



HOTEL PONCE DE LEON—VIEW FROM ORANGE GROVE

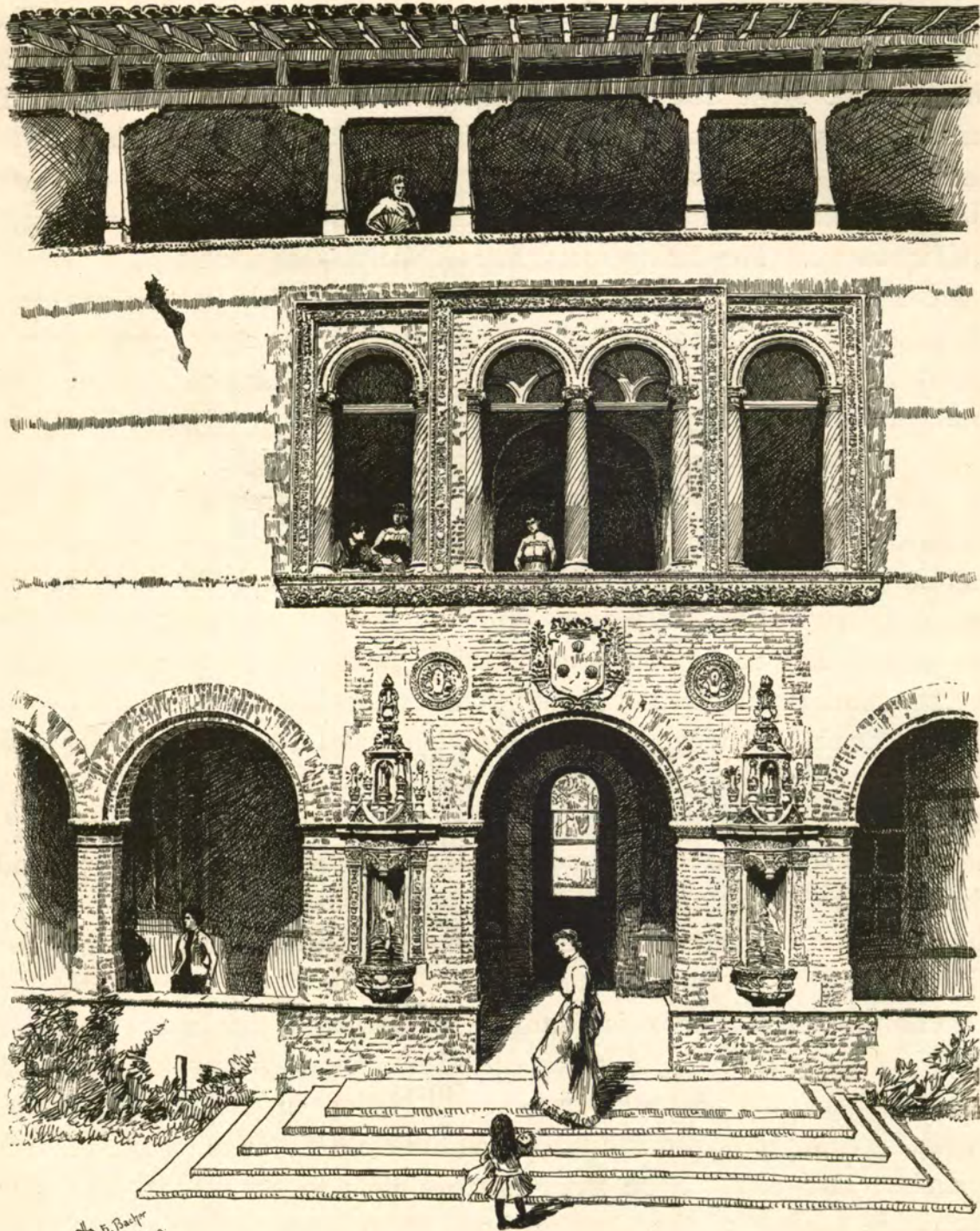
THE PONCE DE LEON

rotunda), reading, writing and smoking rooms, barber shop, billiard-room for ladies, etc., etc. Turning around you get a long view into the huge dining-room. But it is the rotunda itself that claims the attention. It is supported by four great piers and eight oak pillars, on each of which are carved four caryatides of life size. They have the merry, mischievous faces of Spanish danseuses and seem to think nothing of the great load they are bearing, unlike many caryatides one can think of which appear rather top-heavy, not to say crushed. The rotunda is four stories high and around each story runs a corridor with different arches and columns. As we look up and see the people peering down upon us from these corridors of various heights, we begin to form an idea of the huge dimensions all about us.

The great dome is decorated with figures carved in high relief and above these with paintings after original designs, allegorical representations of the history of Spain and Florida. The general effect of color is very rich. You look straight up through an open space in the form of a star, formed by penetrations in the dome, to the copper columns of the lantern.

We must now get a glimpse of the grand parlor—a room 104 feet by 53, but divided practically into five rooms by arches, portières, and screens. In this way cosiness is combined with stateliness, and the monotony which is the usual drawback attached to a large room is broken up. A noticeable feature is an immense mantel-piece rising to the ceiling. The ornamentation and the furniture are rich in design and coloring. The especial apartments for ladies, reading, writing and billiard rooms, open out of the general parlor.

But the great room of the hotel is yet to be seen. A flight of marble steps ascends from the rotunda to a mosaic platform from which you pass through a short hall into a room as large as many an opera house. This is the great dining-room. The central part of this salon is divided from its two rounded ends by rich oak pillars supporting a dome around which runs a clere-story. The room is lighted by numerous



LADIES' ENTRANCE HOTEL PONCE DE LEON

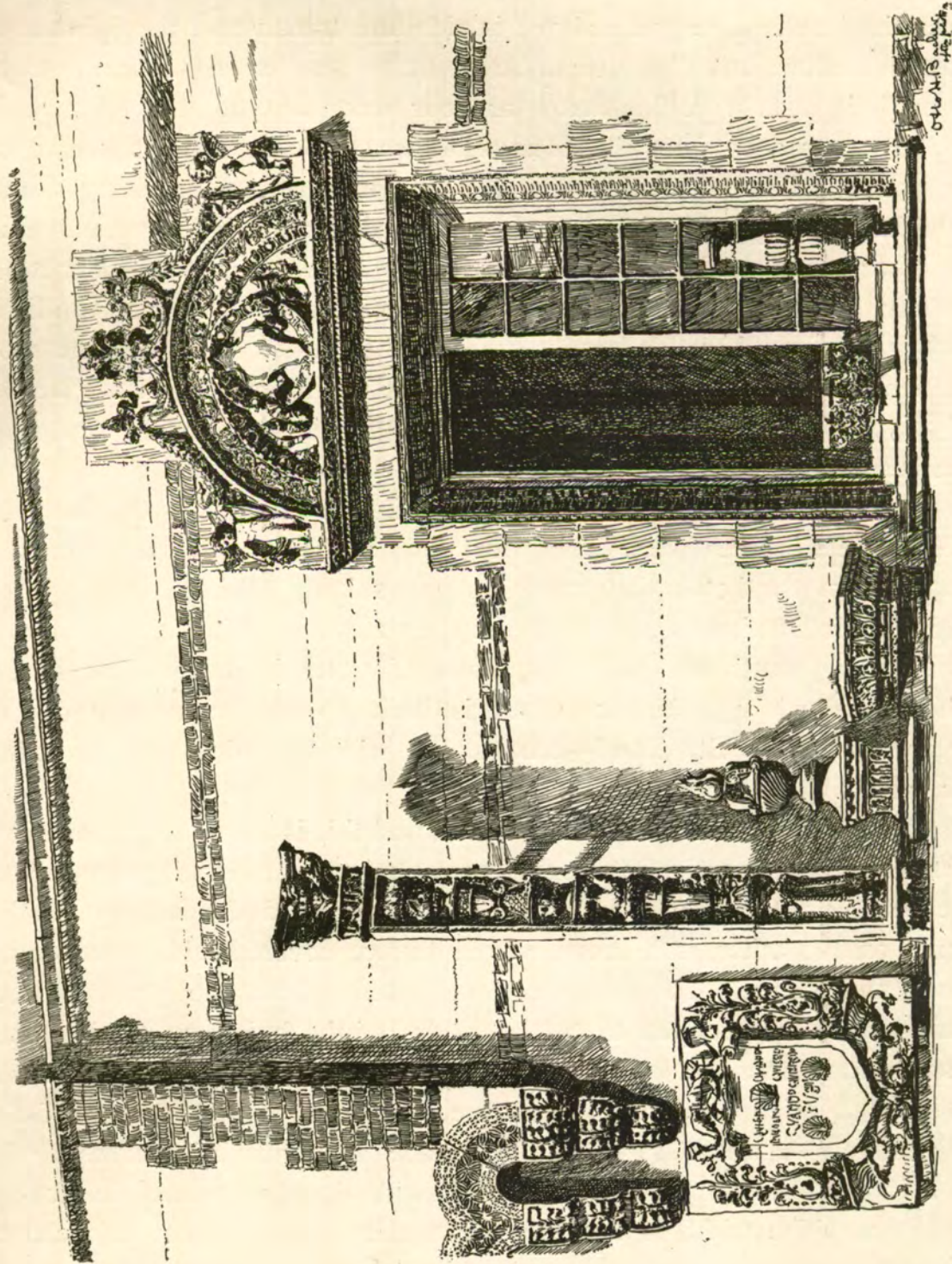
THE PONCE DE LEON

bay-windows of stained glass, illustrating allegorical subjects. The coloring of the decorations in general in this salon carries out the Renaissance spirit that appears everywhere else in the building. It is enough to say that an artist's hand has been at work everywhere, even in so small a detail as the design of the table-cloth patterns. One may dine to the sound of music which floats over the room from a minstrels' gallery above. The dining-room, like all the rest of the hotel, is lighted by electricity. If dining is ever a fine art, it surely can be made so here, if one is fortunate enough to get a table near a window that overlooks the orange groves, sweet with flowers, brilliant with leaves and fruit, and vocal with the hum of innumerable bees.

We must take a hurried glance at the part of the hotel devoted to the service. This is quite separated from the rest of the building by the dining-room. When we say that the pantry is over a hundred feet long, we can leave the bakery, the kitchen and the oven to the reader's imagination!

The dining-room can be approached from the gardens. We have already noticed the steps leading from the rotunda to the platform at the entrance of the dining-room. Underneath this platform and extending from garden to garden is an arched passage, twelve feet high, and richly decorated in terra cotta. Carriages can drive through this passage, which is really a great porte-cochère. From it, steps ascend six feet to the rotunda, from which you ascend six feet more to the dining-room entrance. There is another such tunnel behind the dining-room.

The Ponce de Leon is fortunate in finding a site near the most beautiful garden in St. Augustine. The orange groves of the Ball estate are famous, and these are now included in the hotel grounds. In this beautiful garden one can find realized all his dreams of Southern splendor. Nothing can be more luscious than to stroll at noon under the dense canopy of the Orange Archway or Lovers' Lane, where the trees, planted close together and meeting above, complete a tunnel



STANLEY
1894

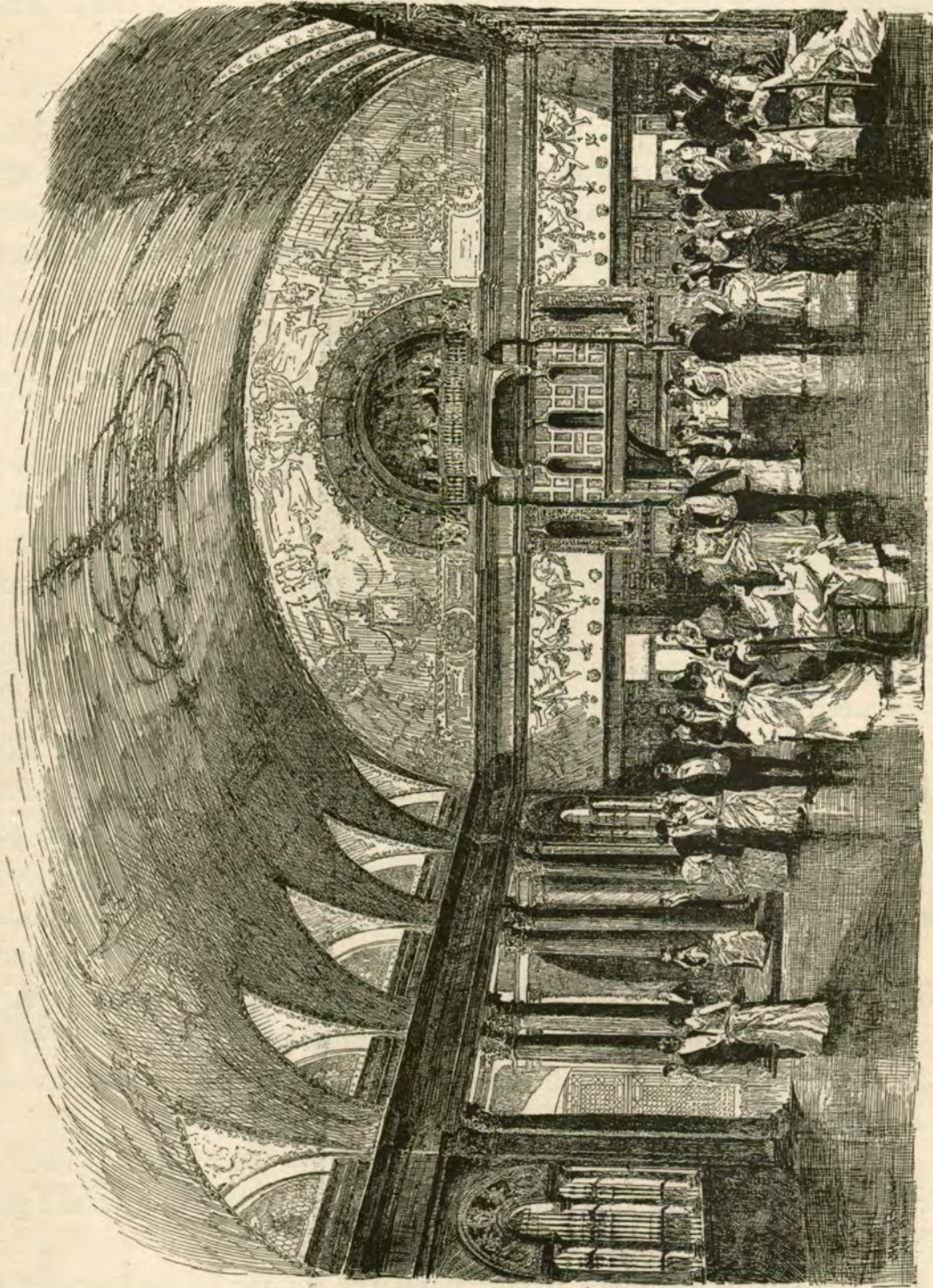
HOTEL PONCE DE LEON—ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

THE PONCE DE LEON

over the head. The green above is rich and translucent, the light about you is mellow, but dim and mystical, and wherever a sunbeam strays through it casts a golden arrow at your feet. But no less effective is the grove as seen from the hotel windows. You look down over a sea of glossy, brilliant green, dotted thickly with the golden oranges and combining richly with the deep Southern sky. But the garden is rich in other trees and flowers. What with date-palms and palmettos, creamy magnolias and scarlet pomegranates, dainty lilies and brilliant verbenas, vines here and mosses there, the garden is a wilderness of beauty. And all this without a word about the roses! Turn the wealth of all the New York flower shops into Washington Square, and you can form some idea of what St. Augustine roses are.

Perhaps the most prominent feature in the grounds is the Cascade. When the workmen were boring for water to be used for the domestic purposes of the hotel, they came upon a sulphur spring of such force and volume that it was decided to use the water for driving the machinery. This spring emits ten million gallons of water in twenty-four hours. The Cascade is 450 feet long and is built up in the manner of the great Cascade of St. Cloud—ornamented with fountains, statues, stairs, etc., and lighted by electricity.

But there is another garden to see, and this is a unique garden sixty feet above the court! Between the two towers and looking down into the court on the one side, while it opens toward the interior of the dome on the other, is a broad, paved terrace covered with an arbor of vines and plants. To this elevators ascend from the ground floor. This terrace is extended to the two sides of the building, forming thus a splendid promenade. The view takes in the sea, the town, the gardens, and the Florida wilderness that creeps up to the very door of St. Augustine. A pretty sight is the terrace at night, brilliant with the electric light and more brilliant still with lovely women in lovely costumes. The width is forty feet, and offers a temptation to a dance under the vines and flowers of this similitude of the hanging gardens



HOTEL PONCE DE LEON—THE DINING ROOM

THE ALCAZAR

of Babylon. The great towers can also be ascended and from these a yet more extensive view may be obtained.

We have now seen the public rooms of the Ponce de Leon, and a word should be said about the rooms for guests. These are all spacious; some of them open on the court garden, some on the loggias of the court or on the balconies, while all are airy and command charming views. The difficult problem of combining the best plumbing and heating apparatus with the best architectural appearance has been grappled with and successfully solved. Indeed through the whole building comfort and beauty go hand in hand, and neither is ever sacrificed to the other.

The Alcazar serves the purpose of providing amusement and occupation to the visitors of the Ponce de Leon, while it furnishes, at the same time, a dependence for those who cannot find rooms in the main hotel. Though very different in detail from the Ponce de Leon, it follows the same general architecture. The great façade presents a pleasing variety of towers, pavilions, minarets, arcades and roofs of old Spanish tiles. First there is a crescent arcade of shops, opening on the Alameda, or broad plaza that separates the Alcazar from the Ponce de Leon. Then you pass through to a square court, a sort of Palais Royal with numerous bazaars, gay with all sorts of wares; a good place to spend a rainy morning, as a covered arcade extends around the court in front of the shops. This court is also a tropical garden. The Alcazar has a great sulphur swimming bath, a salt water bath, tennis grounds, club-rooms and all sorts of aids to merry-making. Besides all this it has 300 bedrooms, and a large general restaurant. Connected with the Alcazar there is also one of the finest Turkish and Russian bath houses in the world.

A word as to the situation chosen for these two hotels. They are near the old town, and that after all is the great attraction of the place, except the climate, which is everywhere! Had a site been selected outside the city walls there would have been quite a long and sandy

THE ALCAZAR

walk to the town, and walking is not altogether a pleasure in the South. We have already spoken of the charming old garden of which advantage has been taken.

St. Augustine has been gaining steadily in favor as a resort for those who dread a Northern winter. It has one great advantage over its rivals, the Rivièra and Egypt, and that is its nearness. Between New York and Italy there lies the stormy Atlantic, never more stormy than the late autumn, when the invalid Northerners are forced reluctantly to leave their homes. But between New York and St. Augustine there is only a short ride of twenty-four hours. Then, too, although it forms a part of our republic, it seems like a bit of old Europe drifted over and cast ashore, and we have seen that this romantic air has been increased and not lessened by the erection of the great hotels.

In point of climate it is quite equal to the Rivièra. There are occasional light frosts which save the place from an enervating warmth, but the air is usually deliciously warm and balmy, and the invalid can enjoy an outdoor life. St. Augustine is singularly free from malaria, as well as from the cold mistral, the withering sirocco, or the sudden earthquake, all of which can be numbered among the possibilities of a winter at Nice. The heat of the later spring is tempered by the pure ocean breezes.

There is plenty of amusement in the vicinity; anglers can fish for bass and trout, sportsmen can range the woods and thickets for snipe and quail, and yachtsmen may enjoy sailing about the Venice-like lagoons. Indeed the traveler to St. Augustine can assure himself that he will be housed comfortably and picturesquely, amused abundantly and in great variety, while he will breathe an air that is always sweet and pure, and bask in a genial sun that shines from a cloudless sky.

TEMPERATURE RECORD, IN DEGREES, FOR ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA., FOR TEN YEARS

[From a paper read before the American Climatological Association, June 1, 1887, by Dr. Frank F. Smith, of St. Augustine]

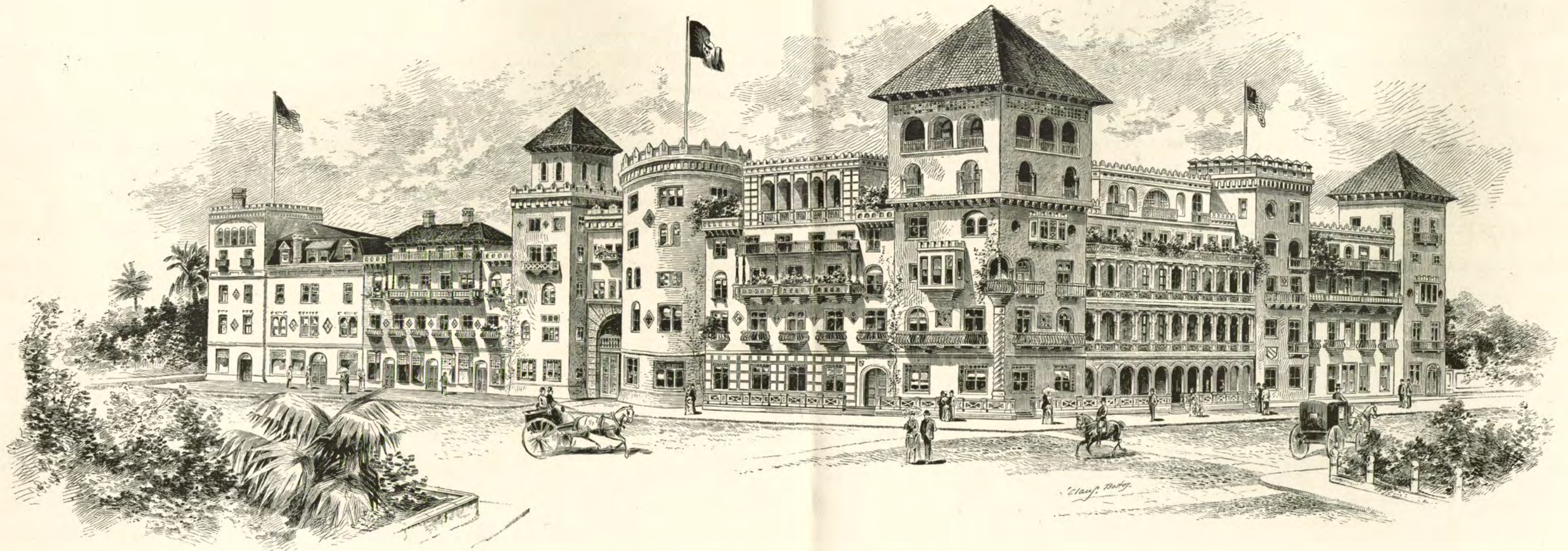
YEARS.	NOVEMBER.	DECEMBER.	JANUARY.	FEBRUARY.	MARCH.	APRIL.	MEAN.
1877-78.....	65.61	59.37	53.77	56.94	64.48	69.63	61.29
1878-79.....	62.33	53.94	54.36	57.25	62.51	67.66	59.39
1879-80.....	65.10	63.33	62.35	62.15	69.78	72.37	65.87
1880-81.....	64.29	55.13	52.79	56.99	58.10	64.24	58.59
1881-82.....	67.39	61.49	62.79	61.02	65.25	69.55	64.58
1882-83.....	61.04	55.12	57.48	61.95	58.42	68.50	60.36
1883-84.....	64.77	59.58	50.21	60.53	65.57	66.99	61.34
1884-85.....	63.85	60.86	58.60	54.98	58.03	68.02	60.72
1885-86.....	61.23	54.20	50.27	53.07	58.68	64.33	57.04
1886-87.....	61.39	52.90	52.60	62.91	59.07	67.56	60.26
Mean.....	63.69	57.59	55.51	58.77	61.98	67.88	60.94

ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA., WEATHER RECORD FROM NOVEMBER TO APRIL (SIX MONTHS)

	1877-78	1878-79	1879-80	1880-81	1881-82	1882-83	1883-84	1884-85	1885-86	1886-87	MEAN.
Mean degree of temperature at } 7 A. M.....	57.55	54.01	61.69	53.59	59.75	56.66	56.18	56.67	52.68	54.58	56.336
Mean degree of temperature at } 2 P. M.....	66.58	66.22	72.61	64.99	70.29	65.60	68.23	65.92	62.77	69.97	67.318
Mean degree of temperature at } 9 P. M.....	60.66	57.95	63.30	57.19	63.71	58.83	59.61	59.59	55.67	56.23	59.274
Total number of days with tem- } perature above 70.....	81	93	127	73	127	77	104	73	58	90	90.3
Total number of days with tem- } perature above 60.....	158	148	176	146	170	143	156	146	128	156	152.7
Total number of days with east- } erly winds from Gulf Stream.....	102	73	99	77	123	82	89	84	92	85	90.8
Total number of days with south- } erly winds.....	62	35	38	36	68	31	44	27	30	10	38.1
Total number of days with rain- } fall.....	N* 33(23)	N 24(16)	N 29(20)	N 34(17)	N 39(17)	N 35(18)	N 27(18)	N 39(24)	N 51(25)	N 24(13)	N 33.5(19.1)

* N—Rains at night. Yearly winter mean of 33.5 days on which rain fell, of which 19.1 were at night, leaving 14.4 days in the 181 days of each winter upon which rain fell during daylight.

The Casa Monica



HOTEL CASA MONICA—ON THE ALAMEDA—ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

F. W. Smith, Architect



THE CASA MONICA



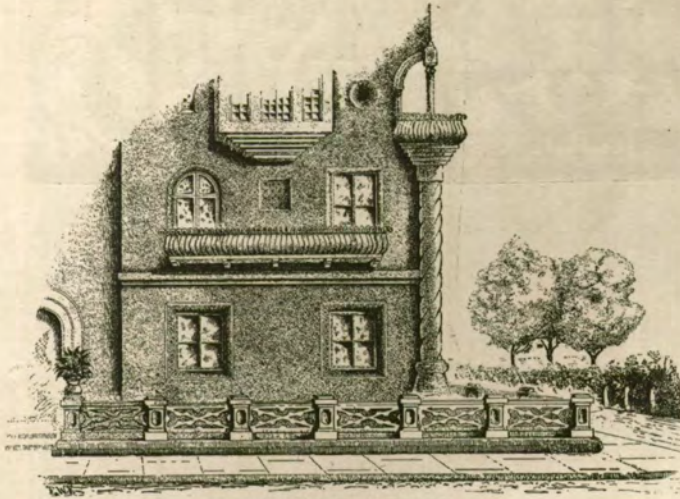
AT the completion of the Casa Monica in January, 1888, another surprise will await visitors to St. Augustine. Fortunately for those who cling to the ancient landmarks, the projectors of the remarkable groups of Spanish hotels upon the Alameda are not iconoclasts. Nothing is cast down, in the march of improvements, of any historic interest. Per contra, not only are these new buildings located beyond and around the old Spanish precincts, leaving them intact, but they are made to harmonize charmingly with those old and interesting features.

The Casa Monica would be at home in any of the old cities of Spain, like those huge castles which dominated neighborhoods in feudal times. Its impression of strength and massiveness increases as the eye ascends the lofty towers from base to battlements. With no need for protection against battering rams of chivalrous ages, there is satisfaction that in the wood-built Southern towns the enemy of to-day—the fire fiend

THE CASA MONICA

—would be foiled in an assault upon these ponderous stone walls. Like

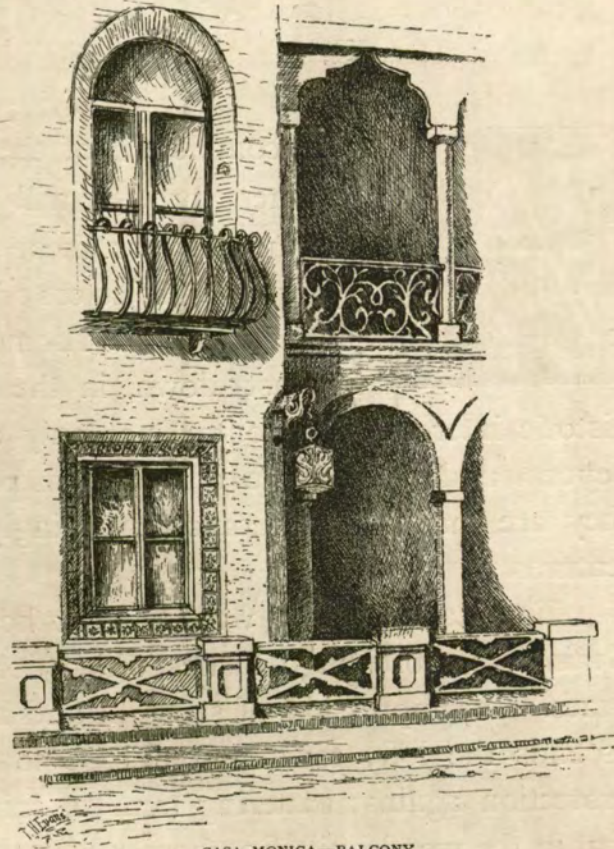
the others of this group, the Casa Monica is a huge fire-proof monolith. Probably nowhere in the world are to be found monolithic structures of such dimensions as these three new hotels upon the Alameda. The concrete "House of Sallust" in Rome, recently dismantled for the modern "Via Nazi-



CASA MONICA—CORNER

onale," was, in material, a counterpart of these. While other remains of block masonry could be detached by machinery of great strength, the house of concrete, after centuries of resistance of fire and earthquake and war, could only be destroyed by dynamite.

The imposing entrance to the Casa Monica is suggested by one of Spain's finest monuments—"Puerto del Sol" (Portal of the Sun), at Toledo. A high archway is flanked by a square tower on the left and a round tower on the right, from whose battlements float respectively the flags of Spain and America.



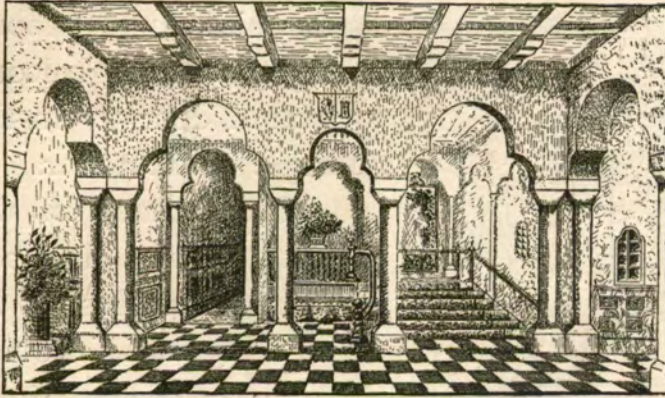
CASA MONICA—BALCONY

THE CASA MONICA

From these two towers stretch two wings, ending at Cordova street with another still higher tower. Around the corner on Cordova street con-

tinues the west façade, making a total frontage of 450 feet.

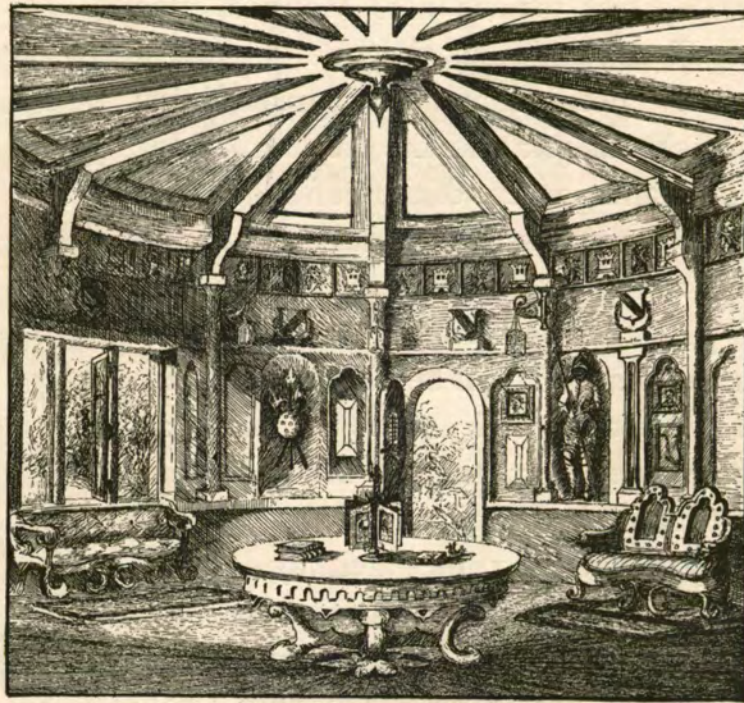
The ornamentation of the front façade consists of tiles, imported from Valencia, set in panels with brilliant effect. These Spanish tiles also decorate stone balconies, which lighten each wing in their



CASA MONICA—VESTIBULE

upper stories. The lower range of windows is charmingly set off by Angelo balconies, after those of Seville. They were originally designed

by Michael Angelo, and named by him "kneeling balconies" because of the protruding base, which enabled the faithful to kneel during the religious processions of his day. Their picturesqueness is enhanced by flowing draperies from the windows, in Spanish colors, thrown outwardly over them. A section of the west



CASA MONICA—ROUND-ROOM

front has several tiers of recessed balconies, also of stone, overlooking

THE CASA MONICA

the handsome gardens of the Alameda in front of the Alcazar. At the corner of Cordova street stands a most unique feature—a stately stone



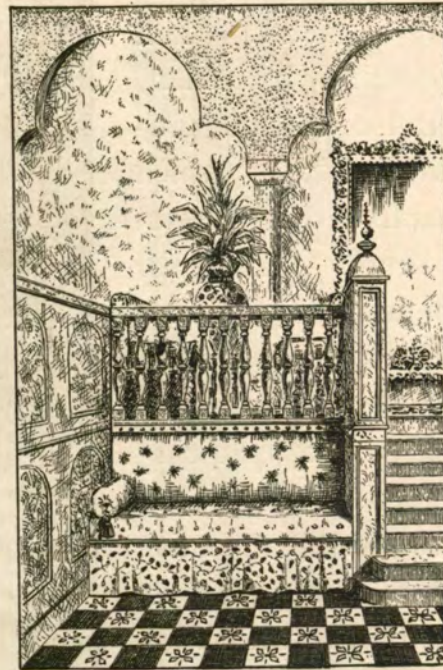
CASA MONICA—VERANDA

column which rises to the third story, supporting a circular balcony with a doorway in the angle of the tower.

The location of the Casa Monica has advantages possessed by no other hotel, for every window of its long frontage looks upon the

magnificent pile of the Ponce de Leon opposite, and also upon either the beautiful Alcazar and Moorish villa, with their gardens, or the old Spanish palace and grounds, with the Plaza and Bay beyond as accessories. Besides the very great charm of such outlook and the freedom of the groves and gardens of the Ponce de Leon, is the exceptional openness to air and sun, owing to the quite peculiar range of public and private grounds around the building. It will be difficult to decide which rooms will have the most attractive prospect, though they are upon an equality in a sanitary point of view.

Upon entering the archway of the "Puerto del Sol" one finds himself in an open court, in which orange trees have been left to scatter perfume from midwinter blossoms. Around this opening is a continuous line of stone



CASA MONICA—HALL BALCONY

THE CASA MONICA

buildings; the central building of the rear, which is the dining-room, being but one story in height, in order that the entire circuit shall be opened to the south, and full exposure to the sun, with unlimited circulation of air. The kitchen and laundry are in separate stone buildings, beyond the possibility of odors therefrom.



CASA MONICA—MAIN ENTRANCE

On the right of the main entrance is the round tower, the ground floor on the front containing a ladies' writing-room. This leads into the drawing-room, also facing King street. Adjoining the drawing-room, on the rear, is a novel feature—a "Sala del Sol," or sun parlor, 108 feet long. This gallery, paved with tiles, has a glass roof, through which

THE CASA MONICA

pours direct sunshine, welcome to the delicate on cool days. There is also a hall decorated in Saracenic style, for amusements and entertainments among the guests. As the hotel is to have an orchestra, the



CASA MONICA—DRAWING ROOM

Oriental hall will afford opportunity for dancing, as well as tableaux in costume appropriate to the surroundings.

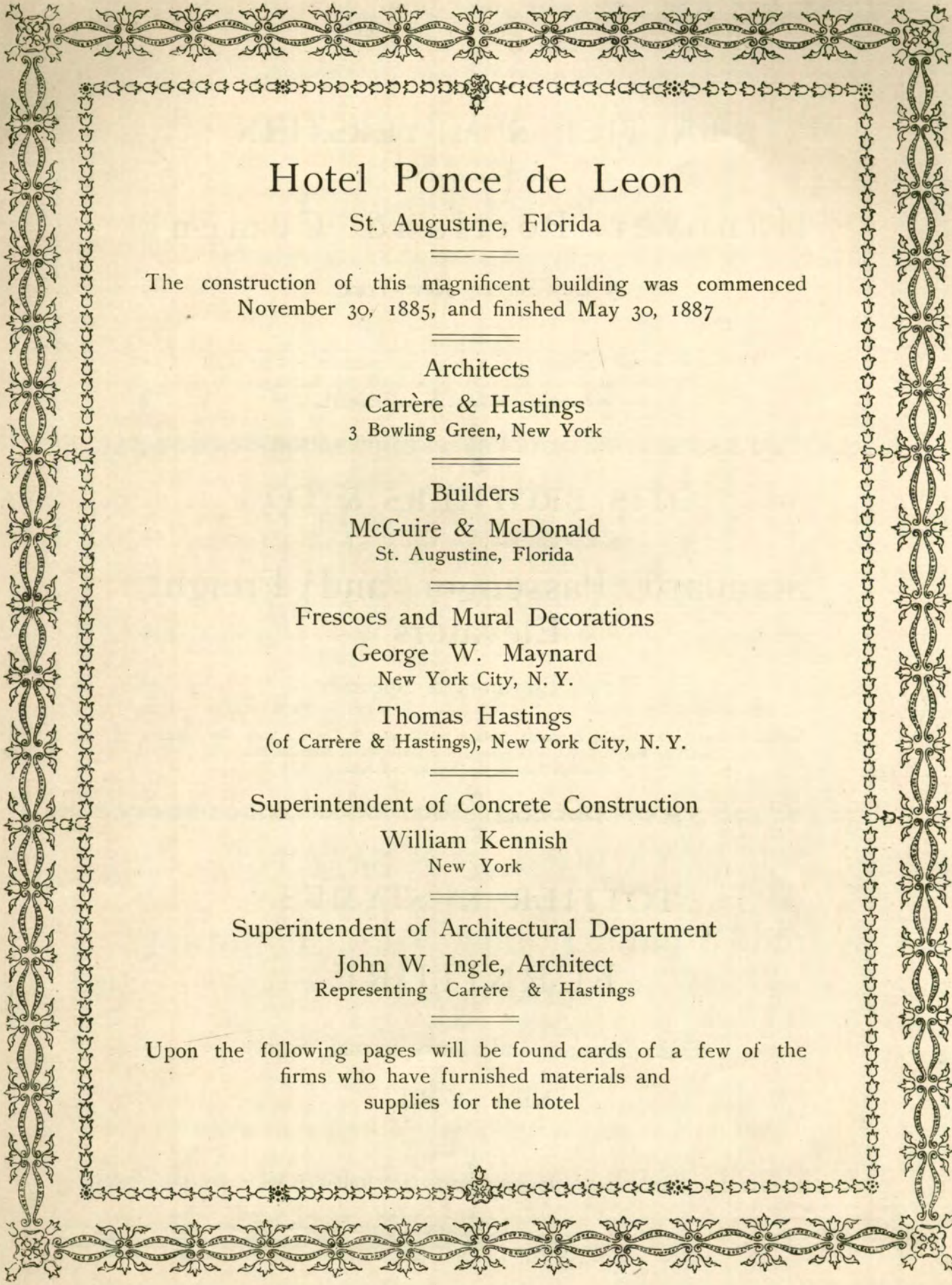


CASA MONICA—SALA DEL SOL

The Casa Monica is appropriately named for the canonized mother of St. Augustine—*Casa* being Spanish for house. There are about two

THE CASA MONICA

hundred rooms, handsomely furnished and all with gas, closets, electric light, etc. They are arranged in suites with private parlors, where meals can be served if desired. Perfect drainage is secured by connection with the great sewer laid from the Ponce de Leon to the harbor. The elevator is within a fire-proof stone shaft, and placed apart from the staircase. Thus with all the appliances of a first-class hotel, with the cuisine equal to the finest in New York, added to remarkable construction and enchanting surroundings, the Casa Monica will attract refined and appreciative patronage. Families in the North are awakening to the fact that the contracted and ill-ventilated apartments which they have occupied heretofore during cruel, tedious winters, may happily now be exchanged for luxurious life in such a home as Casa Monica, and for that constant out-door life which has a charm and healthfulness unknown in snowy latitudes.



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Builders

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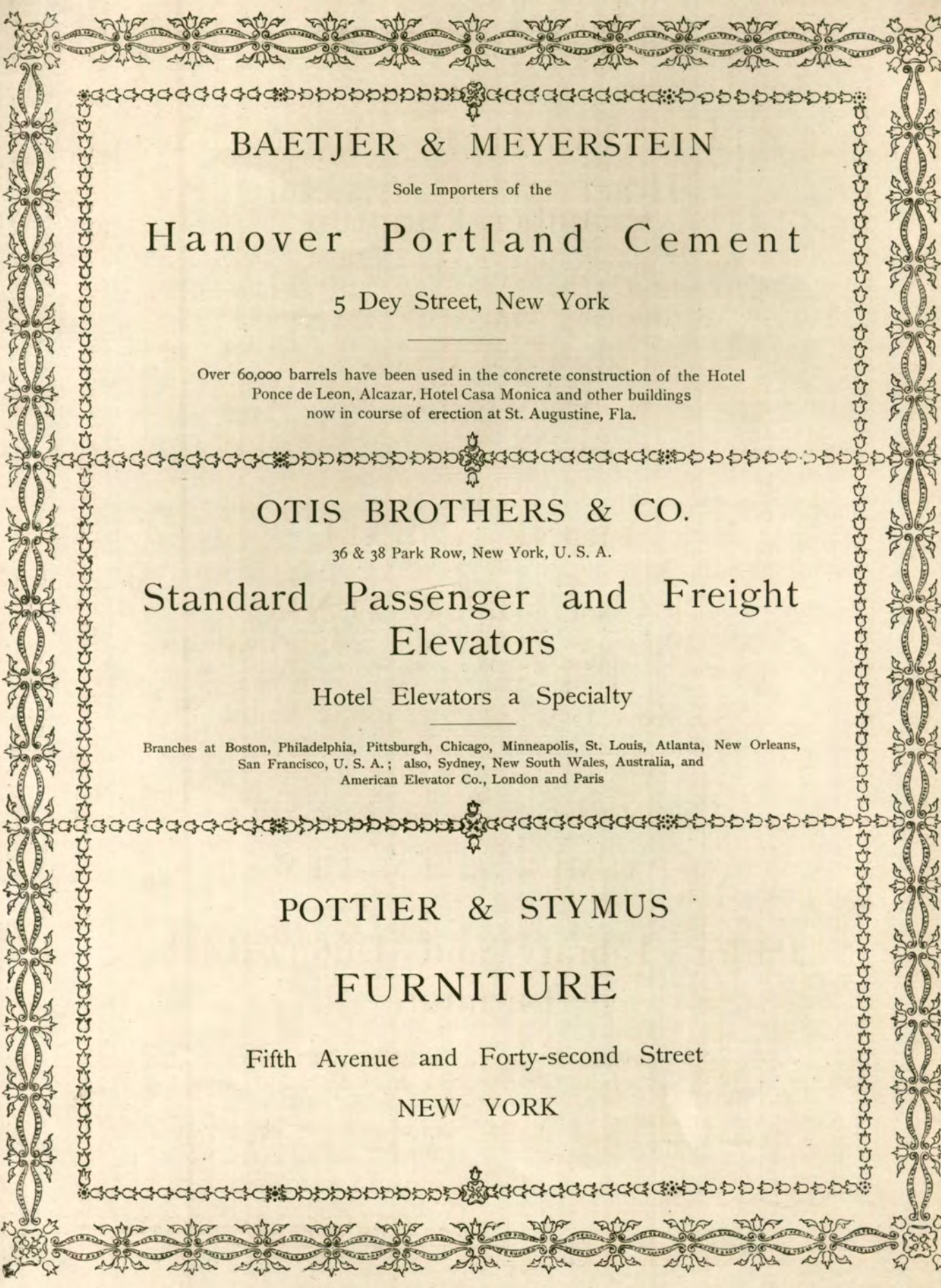
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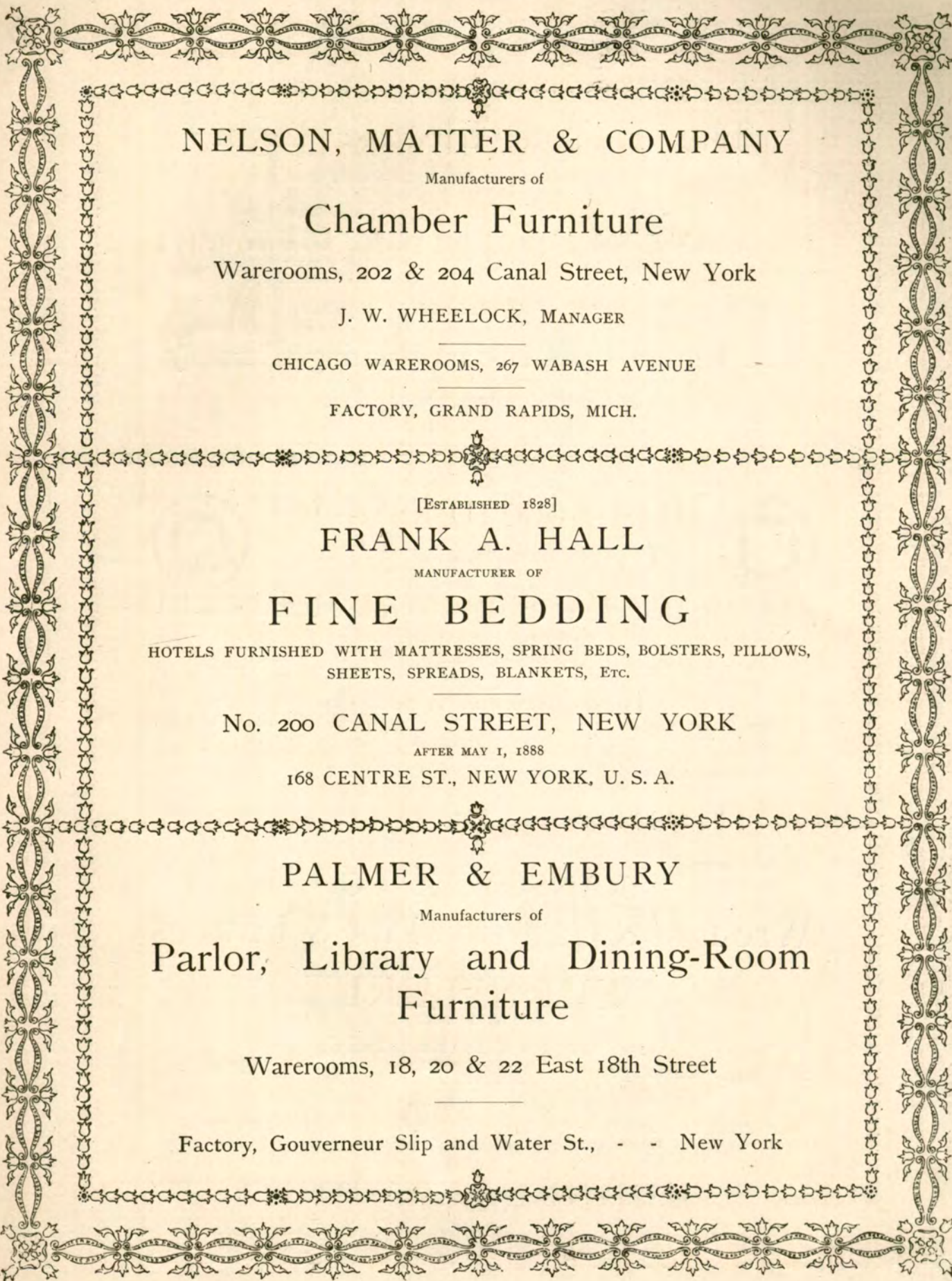
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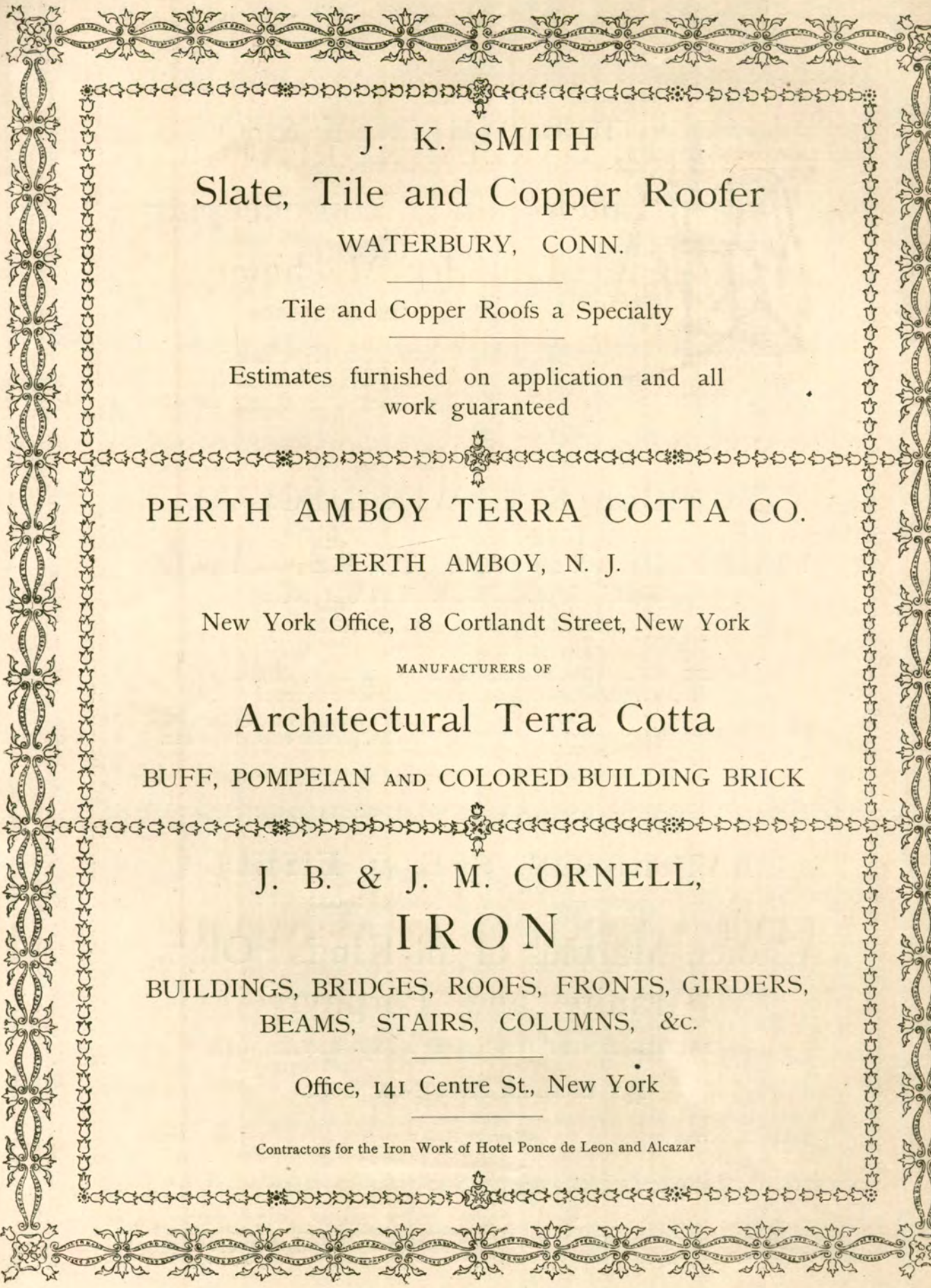
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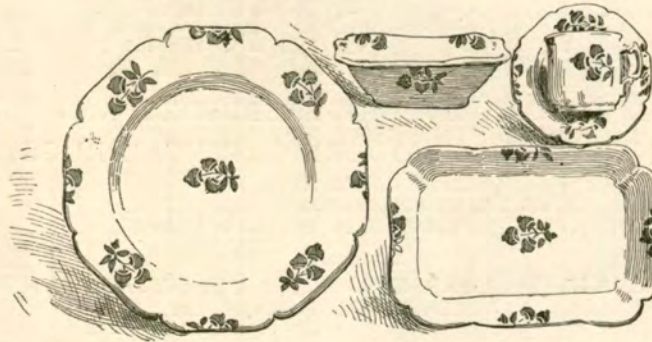
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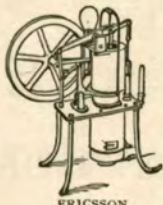
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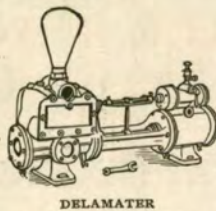
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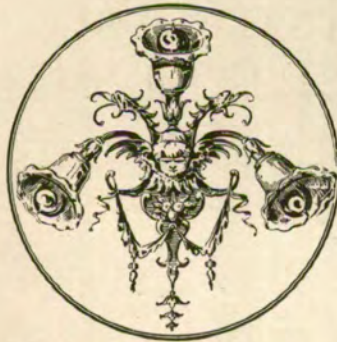
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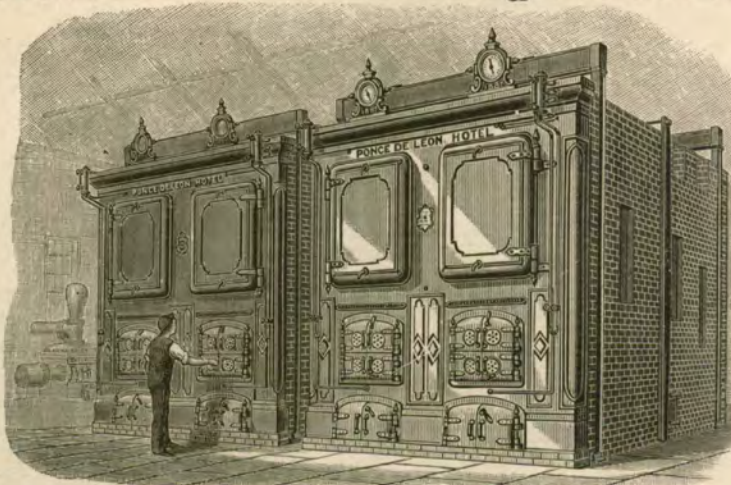
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